

Wild

AUSTRALIA'S WILDERNESS ADVENTURE MAGAZINE

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filters
survey**

**One-person
shelters
survey**

**Tasmania's
remotest
waterfall**

**Outdoors
women**

Bob Brown

**Bogong to
Feathertop**

Jabiluka

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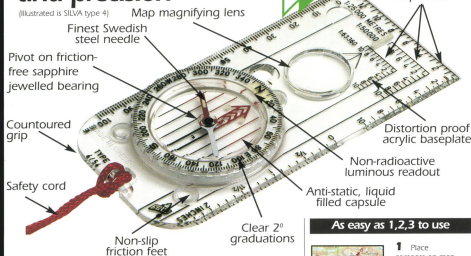


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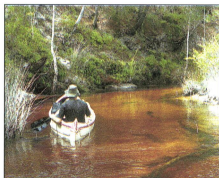
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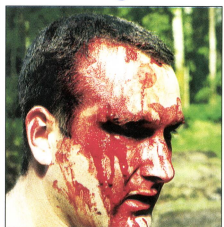
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Wild
ADVENTURES
 Established 1981

Cover Rose Markovic after a bout with Kintore Cave, Katherine, Northern Territory.
 Stephen Hall

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WARNING

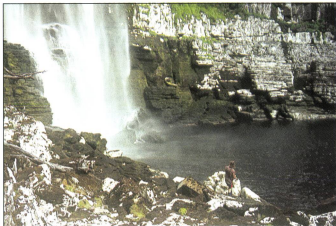
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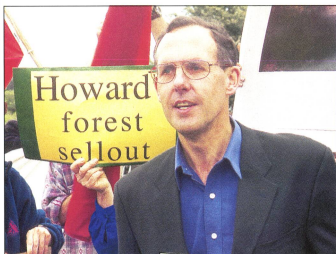
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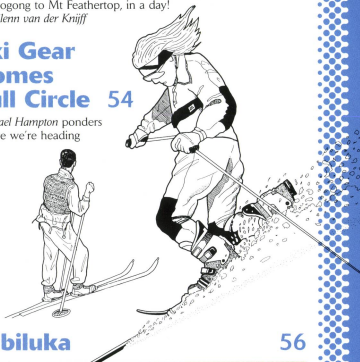


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Up, up and away

Wild is new-millennium bound

I last wrote at length about *Wild* three years ago, in our 15th anniversary special issue, no 60. As much has happened recently and is planned for this year, I'm pleased to say that it is necessary to do so again.

I've often made the point that a good magazine is not static. It constantly has to evolve and change as those who produce it strive to improve it further. Many factors—not least among them feedback from our readers—influence decisions about ongoing changes and hence the nature and appearance of *Wild*. Some changes may appear relatively insignificant; others are more substantial. They all have the purpose of making *Wild* a better magazine. Recent innovations include the upgrading of the second Gear Survey in each issue. It now has its own department and is no longer amalgamated with Equipment items. Both surveys have photos of a representative product of every manufacturer surveyed. *Wild* regularly publishes the only comprehensive surveys of outdoors gear in Australasia. We have lately gone to even greater lengths to widen their scope and ensure their reliability. Other recent changes include a thorough review and redesign of Green Pages, the introduction of photos of selected contributors and the inclusion of more product photos in Equipment.

In this issue we continue the process of improvement by doubling in size of Contents and by a redesign of the cover, Wild Diary, Trix and the Wild Shot page. In addition, we have introduced 'My Favourite Bushwalk', in which you share a special trip with us.

In the next issue we shall publish another famous Wild track notes booklet. *Classic Victorian Alpine Walks* will be supplied only in subscriber copies (other readers can obtain it for \$75.00 a copy) as part of our long-expressed policy of rewarding our loyal subscribers, who comprise the very core of *Wild*'s readership, whenever possible. It is not too late to join this select group and take advantage of this opportunity and of the other benefits of subscribing, which are more substantial than ever before. With the last issue 25 lucky subscribers received a free pair of Shukas sport sandals valued at up to \$110 a pair simply for taking a new or extended three-year subscription. Another offer is announced on page 53 and similar ones are planned for every issue this year! See the order form bound into this issue.

Another exciting development is the launching of the *Wild* Web site. Now you can visit us at <http://www.wild.com.au> and

order *Wild* Things on-line. The Web site also includes the contents of the current issue, Directories and Classifieds, and links to some of the most relevant and interesting outdoors-related sites. More developments are planned.

There have been several changes to the *Wild* staff over the last year. Rosie Johnson was appointed Editorial Coordinator in January. As with other recent appointments, she won the position over a substantial field of well qualified applicants. Rosie brings high academic qualifications to her (new) position and the experience gained in an overseas adventure magazine. She has a childhood bushwalking heritage and a résumé which includes gung-ho freelance adventure-writing forays to the furthest corners of Asia's mountains and other wild places. (Rosie replaces Stephen Curtin who, after three years' sterling service in a similar position is going on an extended trekking and mountaineering trip to Nepal.) Among other recent recruits, Editor Naomi Peters has already, in just a year, made a significant mark on *Wild*. Fiona Sanders, who handles our accounts, has formidable academic qualifications, and Peta Coats, who is responsible for much of the administration at *Wild*, is a qualified computer programmer. Lucy Monie joined us as a second freelance sub-editor late last year. An active climber and bushwalker, she recently completed her final honours year with the Melbourne University prize for history.

These talented and energetic young people—who are important members of the *Wild* team—share the passion of longer-serving staff members for producing a truly outstanding and unique Australian periodical. We strongly believe that *Wild* has a major role to play in explaining to as large an audience as possible why it is essential that our remaining wild places be preserved for all time and in helping to ensure that this is done. These are our twin missions as we enter the new millennium. However, we cannot succeed on our own. We need you to continue to keep us on course and invite you to join us in this thrilling but possibly slightly scary journey. ☺

Chris Baxter

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Environmental impact statement

Wild is printed on Monza paper, which is made of 35 per cent pre-consumer waste and 15 per cent post-consumer waste that has been recycled and oxygen bleached. The cover has a water-based varnish (not an environmentally detrimental UV or plastic finish). We recycle the film used in the printing process. *Wild* staff run an environmentally aware office. Waste paper and printer consumables are recycled, and waste is kept to an absolute minimum. We invite your comments and recommendations; please contact the Managing Editor.



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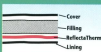
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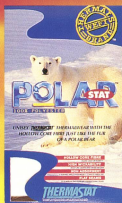
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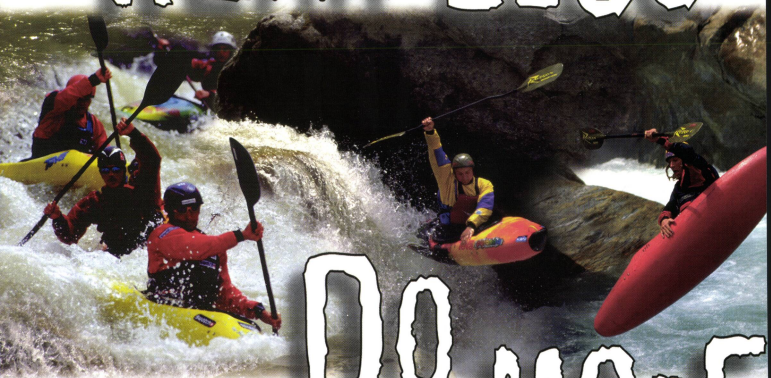
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Religious persecution

Wilderness 'clients' open fire



Tracy Diggins (Wildfire, *Wild* no 71) may not have been aware of the fact, but her letter in opposition to Greg French actually supports his arguments.

Mr French (*Wild* no 70) reported that participants at the Deloraine workshop felt that they had been repeatedly ignored by the Tasmanian Parks & Wildlife Service (PWS) in their attempts to implement a walking permit system for Tasmania's World Heritage Area.

Rather than deal with the legitimate concerns raised and engage in constructive debate, Ms Diggins labels Mr French as 'anthropocentric' and suggests that his motivations are purely selfish...

And what is this heinous crime that Mr French has committed? Proposed a dam? Logged a forest? No, he has dared to ask questions and report doubts about a proposed walking permit system.

Ms Diggins, of course, is 'ecocentric', part of the 'newly emerging philosophy of deep ecology'. Get real. There are few more anthropocentric actions than to appoint oneself a high priest of ecocentrism, instruct others how to think and judge them harshly...

I attended the Hobart workshop and am in general agreement with Mr French's article, to which I could easily add several pages of my own criticisms. I can summarise them by saying that if the current proposal is implemented I believe that there is a significant chance it would lead to a worse environmental outcome than a 'no action' approach. Like the Deloraine workshop participants, I feel that my submissions, letters and personal approaches to PWS have been almost completely ignored.

I can only hope that Ms Diggins's views do not have the support of senior management in the Tasmanian PWS. Like politics, conservation management has to be the 'art of the possible'. Should the PWS be run on religious grounds, it is our natural environment that will certainly suffer the consequences.

Dave Heatley
South Hobart, Tas

I read with amazement Tracy Diggins's response (*Wild* no 71) to Greg French's article on walking permits (*Wild* no 70). Rather than refuting Greg's arguments, I fear that she has only reinforced in many readers' minds the concerns raised by Greg



about the proposed permit system. I find her letter more a statement of devout religious principles than a practical and reasonable discussion of track management issues. While not wishing in any way to decry freedom of religious expression, I suspect that the 'religion' of deep ecology being espoused by Tracey is no different from most other religions in that they claim a monopoly on truth and are not particularly tolerant of opposing views. At a personal level I do not have a problem with such views. I would, however, be quite concerned if the management sections of parks and wildlife authorities become unduly influenced by such extreme conservation values.

Certainly, parks authorities should have as part of their charter the requirement to preserve and protect National Parks. However, I believe that they also need to adopt more of a client focus in planning management of parks. Few bushwalkers would want to withdraw support for the concept of National Parks. But if creation of parks results in control of the land passing into

the hands of authorities whose staff display a clear antipathy to human presence in the parks, support will undoubtedly and quite reasonably wane. I am not intrinsically opposed to a permit system but would need to be convinced that it would be administered fairly and reasonably and not driven by extreme philosophies. To date I have not been so convinced.

G N Wootton
Mornington, Tas

...I have just completed a walk to South West Cape in Tasmania with six other octogenarians and we were very disappointed to find notices that the whole of the South-west is a fuel-stove-only area...We have walked in Tasmania since 1956, when we landed on the beach of Lake Pedder on our way to Federation Peak. Like most walkers, we are careful with our fires and we believe that we should be able to light a fire if it is safe...we should be fighting for this right...

Denis Appel
Garran, ACT

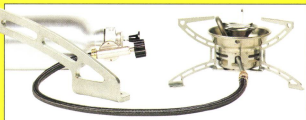
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● Out of the dark

I have been meaning to write for many years to congratulate you on the fantastic standard of content and production of *Wild*—it just gets better and better. You and your team deserve very heartfelt thanks from the Australian outdoors community.

However, the trigger for writing on this occasion was the article titled 'Kayaking Yarrangobilly Cave' in *Wild* no 71. I have visited the site many times over a 35-year period and have never seen it completely unobstructed.

The Natural Bridge, as the cave has been known for more than a century, is a very changeable site and the three who paddled through in 1992 may well have been the first to do so freely. Certainly other canoeists have been through but, as far as I know, their craft have had to be threaded through a barrier of logs. Often it is not possible to get through as the log-jam is too tight.

The National Parks & Wildlife Service is sometimes asked by canoeists to erect signs warning of the danger of this site—the river takes a hard right-hand bend into the cave and if water levels are high a canoeist could rapidly be against a barrier of logs—in the dark! We have not erected signs near the Natural Bridge but there is a warning at the launch site at Yarrangobilly village...

Keep up the good work!

Andy Spate
 Project Officer Karst
 NSW National Parks &
 Wildlife Service
 Queanbeyan, NSW

● Reviewer rolled

The reviewer of the Australian *Eskimo Rolling* video (*Wild* no 71) has got it wrong—it really works. Previously I could roll sometimes, but after using the video reviewed I now succeeded at every attempt...

The secret is getting comfortable under water, keeping the weight low coming out of the water and learning the last part of the roll first—we have tried it and it works.

Brad Allen
 Albury, NSW

Just a quick comment on David Clark's review of *Eskimo Rolling* (*Wild* no 71)... Whatever method is currently employed I, a very modest canoeist, was able to roll on both sides within half an hour using the techniques explained on the video. A good roll? I don't know. But I was certainly very pleased.

Peter Young
 Tallai, Qld

● On for young and old

Am I the only reader who is tired of opening a new issue and finding yet another clean young person staring from the cover? After more than 16 years of reading *Wild* I am probably showing my age but, as I am sure the Editor knows, there are many older people involved in outdoors activities. Your readership must not consist solely of 20-somethings. How about a few grey hairs, or even some white ones, on the cover or

you could just let our wonderful landscape speak by itself? Some creativity please; who knows, perhaps you will even attract some new older readers!

Jan Lancaster
 (a rapidly greying 40-something)
 Tecoma, Vic

Please find enclosed my *Wild* subscription renewal for another three years. Also enclosed is the renewal form for my gift subscription to my grandfather, Marcus Blount, which unfortunately I will not be continuing. My grandfather passed away recently after an extended period of illness...

My first experience of *Wild* was through a copy that my grandfather had many years ago. Later, when I was old enough, I would religiously buy my own copies and later subscribe...

In his last years, when he could no longer spend the time he loved in the outdoors, he continued to live there through the travels and experiences of his grandchildren, and especially through reading *Wild*...

Thank you to all at *Wild*, for continuing to produce the quality of magazine that we should simply be able to expect from all publishers, for providing my grandfather with a source of pleasure in difficult times and for providing me with an ongoing reminder of how the world should be viewed.

Alex Blount
 Box Hill North, Vic

Just a note to say how much I enjoyed issue 70 of *Wild*. I find that, unlike another outdoor magazine, your articles do not seem to be written with advertisers in mind. The article on the early days by John Siseman made interesting reading even though I am unfamiliar with the Victorian Alps. However, what really struck a chord was Quentin Chester's 'Serendipity' story where he came upon an area so lovely that he didn't want to tell anyone else.

There are many places I visit in the wilds of Tasmania where I have just such a feeling...

Peter Franklin
 Lenah Valley, Tas

Last October I took a group to Crows Nest Falls, in Crows Nest National Park, Queensland. The group consisted of 20 people, whose experience ranged from outdoors leaders to beginners...

To top off the activity, on the return journey I distributed all my copies of *Wild*, dating back a long way and—surprise, surprise—they too loved your mag and enjoyed all the articles. You now have 20 more avid fans. Keep the mag cranking as it provides a great read and keeps your readers updated.

Brett Warner
 Brett.Warner.555744@army.defence.gov.au

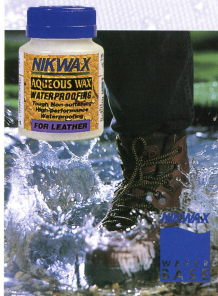
Readers' letters are welcome (with sender's full name and address for verification). A selection will be published in this column. Letters of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Write to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahara, Vic 3181.

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- Nikko Explorer



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Red/Black



Royal Blue/Black

NK-6025 Otter 45

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- 45 litres
- 450 D polyester Ripstop
600 D polyester, PU coating

- Features**
- Zip-hip pockets with mesh pocket inside
 - 2 expandable side pockets
 - Front pocket with organiser compartment
 - 4 compression-straps
 - 2 lower wing-pockets
 - Padded back-straps with padded waist-belt



Navy/Black



Red/Black



Yellow/Black



Orange/Black

NK-139 Rover 23

- 41 X 28 X 18 cm
16 X 11 X 7 inch
- 23 litres
- 450 D polyester
600 D polyester

Features

- Front accessories-pocket
- Zipped front-pocket
- 2 side pockets
- Padded back-straps with zipped pocket
- Waist-belt with quick-release buckle
- 3M reflective tape
- Haul hood



Red/Black



Navy/Black



Royal Blue/Black

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'...may be some time.'

Oz adventurers reach the South Pole

● Up the Pole

Peter Hillary, Jon Muir and Eric Philips arrived at the South Pole on 26 January after travelling 1425 kilometres by ski and ski-sail from Scott Base. They had planned to return to the base in the same manner but bad weather delayed them, forcing them to arrange an airlift. During their journey, the team faced numerous challenges including blizzards, frostbite and illness. They became the first people to trans-



IceTrekters in Antarctica: Peter Hillary, above, and Eric Philips, left, Iridium South Pacific



verse the Shackleton Glacier, simultaneously charting a new route to the South Pole. Hillary and his father Edmund are the first father and son to reach the South Pole.

● 'I'm off to the Big Smoke'

Huw Kingston is closer to completing his personal quest of linking Australia's State capitals by way of the wildest, most interesting human-powered routes.

In October–November 1998 he travelled from Melbourne to Adelaide by kayak, foot and mountain bike in 45 days. The previous year his 'City2City' quest was between Melbourne and Sydney.

● More feats of endurance

In September 1998 Peter Treseder completed what was possibly the first unsupported crossing of Victoria's Little Desert. Starting at the Horse-

shoe Bend camping ground on the Wimmera River (eastern side of the desert), he did the 100 kilometre crossing to the South Australian border (western side of the desert) in 12 hours and 7 minutes.

During the same month he made the first unsupported crossing of the Greater Big Desert, which incorporates Ngarkat Conservation Park, Big Desert Wilderness Park and Wyperfeld National Park. Starting at Coonalpyn, SA, Treseder completed the 215 kilometre crossing to Lake Alpacutya, Victoria, in 28 hours and 15 minutes.

In October Treseder completed the first run of the Frenchmans Cap circuit in Tasmania. Starting on the Lyell Highway, the route traverses the Loddon Plains to Frenchmans Cap, crosses the Franklin River at the Irenabyss (entails a swim), traverses the Mary Creek plain and the Raglan Range and finishes at Nelson Falls (just off the Lyell Highway). The 45 kilometre route took 6 hours and 46 minutes.

Beth Treseder

● New adventure races

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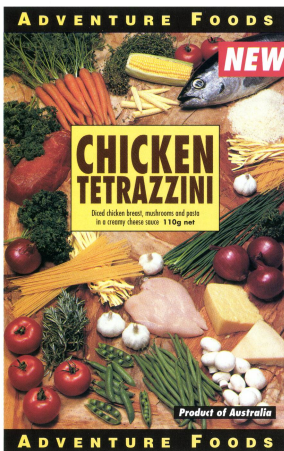
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three-and-a-half hours of diving, only 12 minutes were taken up exploring due to the depth. The remainder of the time was spent commuting to the exploration site and then decompressing on the return trip. The dive utilised mixed gases and oxygen for decompression.

Stephen Bunton

VICTORIA

● School's out

In recognition of the significance of Australia's burgeoning, multimillion dollar outdoors recreation industry, Melbourne's Swinburne University of Technology has introduced a new national training course. The Diploma of Recreation (Outdoor Leadership) includes training in such hard-to-take subjects as bushwalking, cross-country skiing, canoeing and climbing. The curriculum is written by the industry, and the Outdoor Recreation Council of Australia participated in developing the course, which has funding from the Victorian Government.

● Photography's out

Joshua Holko, a photography student, reports that he was apprehended by two National Park rangers while taking photos at Mt Buffalo last winter. On learning that he had sold the occasional photo, they demanded to see his permit. Incredulous, he asked them to explain what they meant; whereupon he was informed that 'professional photographers' are obliged to have a permit—at a cost, he was informed, of \$300 for one or two days up to possibly thousands of dollars for a year, with a separate permit required for each National Park! (The charges for film crews and the like are substantially higher.) The rangers took Holko's car registration number and informed him that he would be liable to prosecution under the *National Parks Act* (1975) if any of his Mt Buffalo photos appeared in print.

Holko subsequently obtained a copy of the National Parks Service's guidelines and procedures manual which confirms that 'still photography for sale' undertaken in a National Park requires a permit. The NPS (now known as Parks Victoria) is not obliged to issue a permit and, if it does, it can impose conditions including—in addition to the permit fee—a requirement for the payment of a bond (typically of at least \$1000) 'particularly...where activities such as rock climbing may lead to increased risk exposure for [the Department of Conservation & Natural Resources] if portrayed incorrectly'. Further: 'The permit holder shall maintain a public liability insurance policy for an amount of not less than \$5 million.'

● 1998 Mountain Bay Challenge

Chad and Chantal Meek were the male and female winners of the 1998 Mountain Bay Challenge, a multisport event held at Lake Eildon from 31 October-3 November. Rob Russell and Karen Tainton came second, and Steve Burns and Shelly Webb finished third.

TASMANIA

Old boys fly in

The 50th anniversary of the first ascent of South-west Tasmania's iconic Federation Peak, by a Geelong College, Victoria, party led by the redoubtable John Béchervaise (see his article on the first ascent in *Wild* no 43), was marked on 29 January. Fred Elliott and Alan Rogers, the only surviving members of

the first-ascent team, were taken by helicopter to the peak. They joined a Geelong College group, who approached the hard way, for the 50th-anniversary celebrations.

OVERSEAS

Three-day rescue of cave

Australian television news in early January featured footage of cave rescuers returning

to the surface after helping to rescue Kieran McKay, who fell 15 metres in Bulmer Cavern, New Zealand—and sustained several injuries. He was taken by stretcher from the cave by up to 100 volunteers over three days but also managed to negotiate large sections of the cave under his own steam. Reports described Bulmer Cavern as the second-deepest cave in the Southern hemisphere. It is, however, the second-deepest in New Zealand behind Blizard Pot–Nettlebed (848 metres) and the third-deepest in the Southern hemisphere behind Muruk Cave–Berenice (1126 metres), Papua New Guinea. The accident

My favourite bushwalk

THE BRINDABELLA RANGE

Bert Bennett

This one-day walk along a section of the Brindabella Range, near Canberra, offers refreshing mountain air, many views, some wildlife, High Country vegetation, and glimpses of history. It is a walk of slightly less than ten kilometres and is suitable for anyone who is moderately fit. The walk can be extended for those seeking challenging 'character development'.

Starting at the Arboretum near Snow Gum Hill (1430 metres), the route of my favourite bushwalk mainly keeps to the Australian Capital Territory/New South Wales 'border break', goes over Mt Aggie (1496 metres), deviates through a subalpine forest, returns to the ridge and climbs Mt Franklin (1644 metres), then drops along Wombat Walk to Mt Franklin Chalet. The ridge, not broad, stands very high above the Goodradigbee and Cotter Rivers, 800 metres below. The walker can proceed leisurely along a snow-grass 'corridor' (wild flowers in summer) amid healthy snow gums, keeping an eye out for border markers put in by the historic survey 85 years ago (a very tough assignment at that time). The border ascends to rocky ledges atop Mt Aggie, a natural viewing platform. Here—as at Mt Franklin and elsewhere—superb views cover an expanse of near and far peaks, valleys, a high plain and a distant lake.

The deviation (in Bimberi Nature Reserve, NSW) between Mt Aggie and Franklin leads through a sheltered, high valley of impressive mountain gum and alpine ash, the home of many wombats. The walk ends at the historical Mt Franklin Chalet built enterprisingly 'in the wild' more than 60 years ago by the Canberra Alpine Club and taken over in 1986 by Namadgi Na-

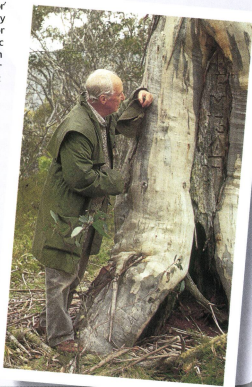
tional Park. Joint efforts by the National Park and the CAC have restored the chalet splendidly so it can be seen in its heyday appearance (1950, 1960s).

Wildlife may be seen along the way—kangaroos, perhaps an echidna, maybe a wombat or two (certainly burrowings) and, depending on place and timing, bogong moths.

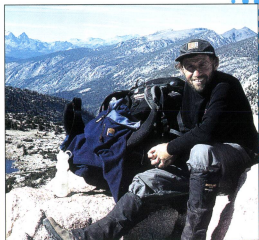
Energetic walkers who wish to extend the walk have many possibilities, such as Ginini Falls, Mt Gingera, and Corin Dam (by way of Mt Gingera and Stockyard Spur).

The Arboretum near Snow Gum Hill is 75 kilometres south-west of Canberra. From Bulls Head, follow the Mt Franklin road for six kilometres. A minor car shuttle is required.

The best maps to use are the *Tadbinbilla* and *Corin Dam* 1:25 000 Central Mapping Authority sheets.



Bert Bennett at the historical border-marker tree 13 miles from Mt Coree, marked 85 years ago. *Bennett collection*



Terry Bolland on California's John Muir Trail during his 16 000 kilometre self-propelled US journey. *Bolland collection*


happened five-and-a-half kilometres from the entrance to the 50 kilometre long, 748 metre deep cave system.

SB

Self-propelled in the USA

Forty-seven-year old Terry Bolland, author of *The Long Way Home*, has returned from an extended, self-propelled journey in the USA similar to the extraordinary one he took around Australia in 1990. Bolland travelled 16 000 kilometres by foot, bicycle and kayak, visiting 30 States in eight months. He started from Manhattan Island, New York, and zigzagged across and up and down the USA, finishing in Los Angeles, California. Bolland's achievements include kayaking the length of the Mississippi River (4100 kilometres), walking the 800 kilometre long Appalachian Trail and the 400 kilometre long John Muir Trail, and cycling a total of 10 700 kilometres.

Rising to the challenge

Nigel Aylott came 32nd in a field of 72 at the 100 kilometre World Challenge Race in Japan in October 1998, with a time of eight-and-a-half hours. Also in October, the team of John Jacoby and Tim Smallwood came second at EcoChallenge in Morocco. 

Readers' contributions to this department, including colour slides, are welcome. Typed items of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Send them to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181.

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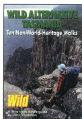
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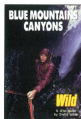


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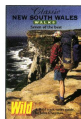
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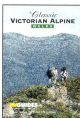
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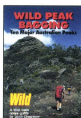
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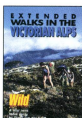
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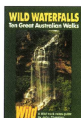
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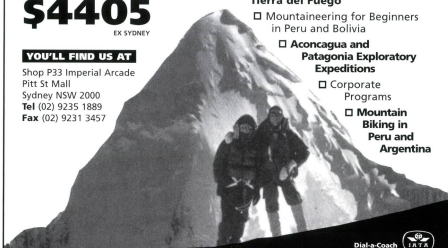
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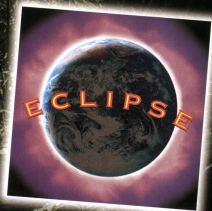


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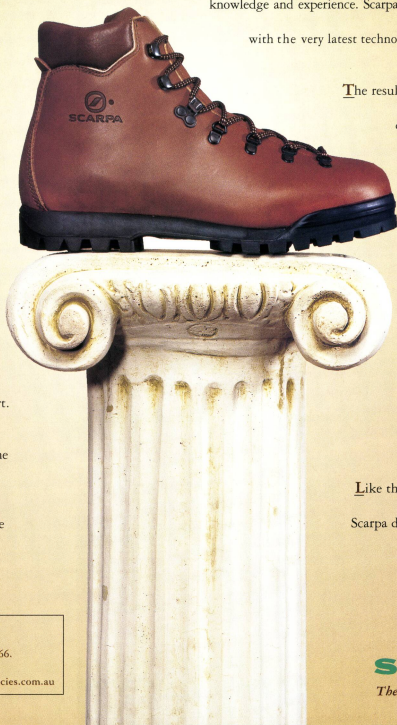
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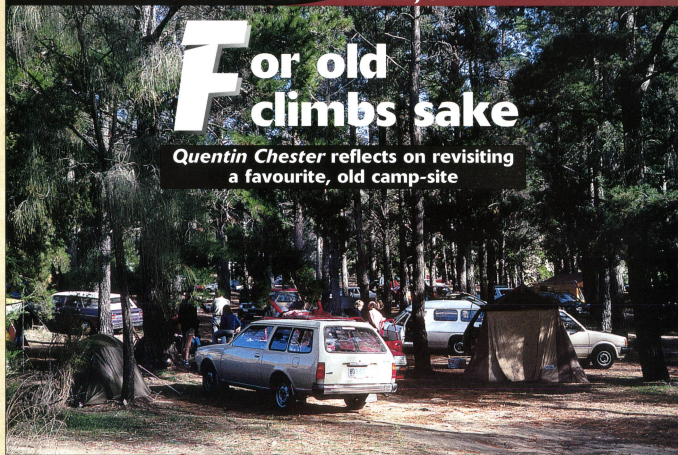


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For old climbs sake

Quentin Chester reflects on revisiting a favourite, old camp-site



The music raged on. There were screams and giggles—and a few primal yelps thrown in for good measure. The camping ground rocked to a pulsating, tribal rhythm. Through my tent-flap I spied a camp-fire blazing and a mob of scruffy youths including a newly adolescent girl—somebody's daughter—dancing around the flames.

For crying out loud, I grumbled to myself, 'don't they know what time it is? Don't these hoons understand that I've just driven for five, mind-scrambling hours to get here? Don't they realise that I'm battling a cruel, upper respiratory tract infection and that, as a result of the swinish sounds I make when I sleep, I've been banished to a separate tent while my spouse and offspring enjoy the comforts of the family dome? And don't these hyenas understand that their cavorting threatens my fragile reunion with a place—and a camp-site—that've been part of my personal mythology for 25 years? I squirmed in my sleeping-bag and fumbled for my watch. This place has gone to the dogs', I muttered. The time was, ahem, 10.12 pm.

Public camping grounds can be the best and worst of places and the infamous Pines at Mt Arapiles is no exception. Despite my curdling fears of a sleepless night, it later emerged—according to those within earshot of my tent—that I collapsed into a state of snorting semiconsciousness some time around 10.19 pm. The following morning dawned calm and misty. I slunk away from the silent camp-site and walked up towards the Organ Pipes, watching a drapery of

cloud rising from the spires and the distant Bluffs to reveal the high walls of orange quartzite—walls which had taught me to be grateful that climbing ropes were long and strong. Despite the coolness of the hour I felt a rush of blood and a clamminess in my palms.

Circling back through the Pines I quelled the urge to extract every peg from the tents of my hormonally disturbed tormentors. By the time I was gulping my second mug of tea I'd achieved a kind of provisional equilibrium. In the light of day I was pleased to see that the camping ground was the same daggy plot of pine trees that I'd first begun to frequent two-and-a-half decades before. Apart from the new requirement to pay camping fees, a Taj Mahalesque composting toilet and a perimeter fence that now keeps the cars on the outside the biggest change was the loss of the camping ground's old tap. Not perhaps the most earth-shattering difference, but when you've been visiting the same tap by the same tree for a quarter of a century and you return after a long absence and spend 20 disconcerting minutes groping in darkness and dirt without success, you begin to doubt your mental fitness.

Into my third cuppa—with water sourced from newly installed taps at the entrance to the Pines—the thought arose that if the camping ground was pretty much the same, it must be I who had changed. Perhaps it was just another instance of getting used to being back in a tent on lumpy ground. But there was also the possibility of a deeper

The Pines camp-site, Mt Arapiles, Victoria—the ambience of a refugee shanty town, complete with battered flysheets, broken-down cars, boxes of rotting vegetables...
Chris Boxter

malaise. Maybe my daughters were on to something when they branded me Grumpy Spice. Perhaps with the passage of time and the steady accumulation of life's little liabilities I was becoming a curmudgeon—an unwitting agent for the kind of pinched intolerance my chums and I used regularly to drive five hours to escape. Could it be that I was turning into just another Waste of Spice?

Fortunately, I was spared further introspection by a day's climbing at Mitre Rock. It was a gentle reintroduction to the pleasures of warm stone. The two families concerned managed to usher their girls up a couple of climbs, enjoy a leisurely picnic in dappled shade and squeeze in three more short wall routes with enough spice to get the adults' adrenalin circulating. No one was too fussed about trying to reclaim the glory days of youth—even as inconsequential as ours had been. Given all the bewilderments of middle age it seemed a noble enough victory just to be moving on rock once again, with the sun on our backs and the vast pastoral patchwork of the Wimmera to gaze into from the belay ledges.

By the time we repaired to the camping ground for an evening around the fire my

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outlook had greatly improved. There was warmth, Cabernet to quaff, and several hours of idle banter including remembrances of past climbs and a succession of increasingly juvenile stories. It was just like the bad old days. Doubtless the climbing played its part—to revive those giddy sensations of grappling with steepish rock always has a liberating effect. But I also couldn't help feeling that just being back in the Pines with long-time friends, raucous laughter, the smell of damp pine needles and the occasional glimpses of moonlight on the Atridae amounted to a kind of tonic in itself.

Among the climbing *cognoscenti* it has become commonplace to mock the squalor and subcultural eccentricities of this campsite. Admittedly it's hardly a glamorous locale. Many trees are ailing and the site has a disconcerting slope that makes it a challenge to pitch tents. Typically, the fireplaces are clogged with debris and the surrounding ground is covered with bread bag-tops, pull-tops from cans, and flakes of scorched foil. In summer the place turns into a dust bowl; in winter there are trenches of mud underfoot. For amenities, there are the taps and a toilet block though the latter facility usually poses the kind of biomedical hazard that should be placed under armed quarantine.

'It was a place of drunken revelries where virginity was often not so much lost as mislaid.'

Yet, for all the blighted aesthetics, this is probably Australia's most revered haunt for climbers and also a place which regularly draws pilgrims from across the globe. While the camping ground has some advantages—most notably its proximity to the cliff for foot-shy climbers—the appeal of the area transcends mere practicalities. For nearly 40 years this has been a place where climbers have congregated to ply their craft. It has witnessed the restless development (some would say degeneration) of assorted climbing styles and subcultural trends. As Michael Law observed some time ago: 'One can trip up to Arapiles, and within a week become strange and incomprehensible; a creature of unlikely and unfamiliar ritual, jargon, dress and diet.'

Accordingly, the Pines has always been rather noisy, crowded and disreputable. Even as far back as the mid-1970s tent-sites were hard to find on a holiday weekend and the camping ground regularly echoed to the wailing cries of Bob Dylan and Neil Young blaring from car radios, the clang of shiny, new Hexentrics and Roland Paulig's pet parrots screeching from a nearby branch. It

was a place of drunken revelries where virginity was often not so much lost as mislaid. A place where people in white trousers and flat caps played camp-fire pranks and then fervently debated the limits of what was possible, both on and off the rock.

Only a few years later climbers began to take up full-time residence in the Pines. Being castaway from large towns and attendant authorities, Arapiles made an ideal outpost for a kind of ad hoc tribalism. At times the place took on the ambience of a

feeling that I no longer had a right to the scene.

It was another gleaming winter day and as we edged our way up through the bush I realised that I had last visited Campbells Kingdom 20 years earlier. Back then Arapiles had been strangely deserted and I'd waited for three days for a climbing partner—a friend of a friend—to join me from Melbourne. He never showed up and I passed the time roaming the forsaken walls, watching showers of sleet race over the mountain and taking shelter beneath overhangs and in dark, overgrown gullies. As much as I enjoyed the freedom of fossicking by myself I was also relieved when, on the third night, I heard a car roar into the camping ground and then the sound of rowdy laughter as four strangers tumbled out. For the next two days until my lift home arrived the five of us shared a camp-fire and a couple of climbing ropes. We spent long afternoons trembling our way up classic lines on the Watchtower Faces and then chuckling all the way back to camp, bound together by the euphoria that comes from fooling with gravity.

For some reason the return to Campbells Kingdom didn't amount to much, so we finished our weekend on more familiar ground with a long, loping climb on Tiger Wall. There were parties on either side of us and all morning the cliff resonated with the tinkle and clink of climbing gear, interspersed with the occasional, muffled grunt or cackling laugh. It was just like the climbing days of old.

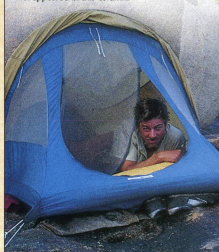
From the belay ledge I looked out towards the nearby town of Natimuk, then below to the Pines and I thought of a press cutting my San Francisco connection had recently sent me. It was a story about Camp 4, the notorious climbers' lair in California's Yosemite Valley. The local park service was planning to develop the adjacent area by putting in a parking lot, assorted buildings and a 335-bed accommodation lodge. The climbers were outraged. To them Camp 4 was 'hallowed ground', a place worthy of being declared a national historical site. They argued that the proposed development would destroy the aspect and character of the place.

When I visited Camp 4 a few years ago it was almost as dusty and dishevelled as the Pines, yet the place did have an unmistakable atmosphere, haunted as it is by the 'grunge ghosts' of climbing's past. The writer for the *San Francisco Chronicle* thought it a bit comic to claim sacred status for such a 'nondescript camping ground'. But perched atop Tiger Wall and staring into the tops of the pines with the laughter and camp-fire smoke rising to greet me, I couldn't help thinking 'why not?' Why shouldn't these plots of dirt and trees and offbeat dreams be accorded a little recognition for their own dog-eared page in history? ■

Quentin Chester

Quentin Chester

(see Contributors in Wild no 3) writes regularly about going bush. He is the co-author of *The Outdoor Companion*, *The Kimberley—Horizons of Stone* and *Australia's Wild Islands*. His most recent book, *The Wild Calling*, includes several stories that first appeared in this column.



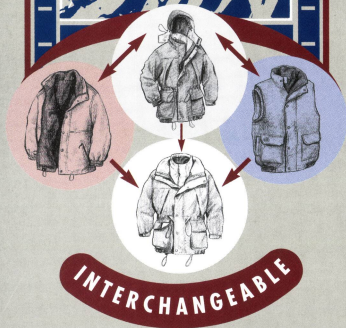
refugee shanty town, complete with battered flysheets, broken-down cars, boxes of rotting vegetables and occasional outbreaks of vermin and disease. As the climbing became more earnest and the ethics and egos more contentious, the means of expressing outrage, youthful indifference and punk-inspired rebellion verged on the surreal. Had Joseph Conrad wanted to update *Heart of Darkness* he could have done worse than spend a month observing the 'unspeakable practices and unnatural acts' in the Pines.

Even occasional visitors who called in simply to do a few climbs found it hard to ignore that the place had an edge. That edge might have been pretty ragged but, given that climbing is a haven for misfits and promotes such fierce individualism, almost any kind of 'scene' is noteworthy. And in among all the chaos and oddness, standards on the cliffs scaled new heights. Out of the loose community in the Pines climbing continued to reinvent itself.

For our second day at the Mount we continued the theme of remote and obscure climbs by scratching around at Campbells Kingdom, a tranquil place far removed from the traffic on the main cliffs. For all the *bonhomie* of the Pines, part of me still hankered for a little solitude. In the back of my mind there was, I suppose, a sheepish



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Enjoying the outdoors

Things to do when you're going nowhere,
by Quentin Chester

Several of my acquaintances go bush not so much for the walking as for the sitting down. I also know climbers with a high regard for belay ledges and canoeists who relish moments when they can ease back and drift with the current.

One of the paradoxical pleasures of days in the wild is doing very little. As invigorating as it might be to lope along a high, windswept ridge or lunge through a craggy overhang, a lot of outdoors enjoyment arises during somewhat more passive, aimless intervals. Some travellers describe these moments of fresh-air repose in the language of meditation or DIY mysticism but often what is being talked about is simply the relief of doing sod-all—with a view.

Idleness is not, however, necessarily indulgent. To take a pause in proceedings is often a chance literally to catch your breath and take stock. No trip can ever be an exercise in perpetual motion. Nor is it possible to exist by sloth alone. Instead, most journeys have an erratic ebb and flow: liberating spurts of activity mixed with calming, recuperative spells.

Often the backwash of adrenalin brings a kind of hazy, breathless euphoria. At home there are countless tasks and distractions that militate against sloth. Out in the bush, in the wake of a torrid climb or a frantic stretch of white water, sloth seems entirely fit and proper. Indeed, doing not much deserves to be regarded as one of the more important outdoors skills. If things turn nasty and a storm bails you up in a tent or snow-cave, understanding the art of indolence may well preserve your sanity. Even in moments of serious inactivity there is usually something going on, even if that something is lying on your back counting stitches in the tent seams.

While day-dreams have their own whimsical nobility there are many other ways to give shape to downtime. We might plot our trips in terms of distances and destinations but what makes outdoors travel worth the fuss is how we connect with our surroundings. And in the bush



Girls just wanna have fun! Both photos
Stephen Curtain

you connect from the ground up, building a sense of place from observing contours in the land, patterns of foliage, prevailing weather and natural signs of life. The immediacy of these discoveries—a majestic ridgeline in silhouette, the spray of colour in a rock orchid, the ragged screech of a black cockatoo—gives impetus to learning the names for places and things.

To appreciate flora and fauna sounds simple enough. You just grab a few field guides and a pair of binoculars and away you go. The reality, however, can be daunting. Practice and a disciplined eye

are needed to distinguish between the amazing profusion of living things, obscure calls and fleeting glimpses.

The rewards for being observant can sustain a lifetime of interest. For example, one of the things I remember most about my brief association with Paddy Pallin was his engagement with place. Even after 60 years of exploration he was still devoted to the details of the bush. The joy he showed when recognising native shrubs and wild flowers was almost palpable.

The achievements of a pioneer like Paddy are also a reminder that places in the outdoors often have human stories to tell. This sense of following in the footsteps of others can add a further layer of

interest to bush outings. Aboriginal mythology, the journals of early explorers and contemporary travellers' tales all enrich a feeling for place. At times even fiction offers a window on your experience. For instance, to read a novel like Richard Flanagan's *Death of a River Guide* would be a pungent counterpoint to any rafting or kayak trip.

Discoveries and digressions turn an itinerary into a journey. At some point most of us want to fashion a record of our travels. This can be as basic as scrawling notes in the margin of a map. Yet there are many more creative responses, from knocking up a water-colour to penning a haiku.



Photography is undoubtedly the most popular way to preserve a few memories. In their most high-minded form photos catch the essence of time and place. Composing images trains us to see with a discerning eye, so that we value



A bovine bushwalker struts her stuff. (No bull.)

not just the grandeur of a scene but the details close at hand and the play of light on the landscape.

At a more pragmatic level photography provides a ready record of day-to-day events. It's a fair bet that, ten

years on, the snaps you'll treasure most will not be the artful yet anonymous landscapes but the spontaneous shots of companions and camp-site life. Unless you have serious ambitions of being the next Ansel Adams, consider using a compact point-and-shoot camera that can be plucked from a pocket to seize moments of comedy and pathos as they occur.

In the days before film explorer types worth their salt travelled with paints and a sketch pad. For rendering personal impressions and suggesting the moody vistas there is still nothing quite like a quick pen-and-ink drawing or a deft water-colour. Pencil sketches can also add interest to diaries and journals. And for those with slothful tendencies, a painting session provides one of the best reasons for dallying before a view.

Although solitary pastimes can be satisfying, much of the pleasure of a trip is in the shared moments. Old-fashioned conversation, Bill Clinton jokes and telling tales help to pass the time. A pack of cards or a lightweight board-game are handy for long winter nights. Star charts also provide hours of idle speculation for a group.

Fortunately, it's been many years since I've heard anyone sing 'Kumbaya' around the camp-fire. Of course, genuine musical talent should be encouraged. A gentle guitar- or harmonica solo always makes a moonrise memorable. Then you can launch into the classic hits of the 1970s or a round of bad-taste charades after a few appropriate stimulants—by which time blisters and sore joints will be long forgotten.



● Keeping a journal

'Woke at 6.37. Another fine day. Muesli for breakfast (again). After packing our packs we started walking...'

If you're going to chronicle your journey, try to avoid bland, repetitive summaries. By all means take a note of the weather and distances covered but a journal has the power to be so much more.

The most common pitfall is to try to craft long, flowing paragraphs while on the move. Keep your comments succinct. Forget about elegant syntax; just get the details down. It's worth noting features in the landscape but picture-perfect descriptions are less important than isolating what makes a place striking or special.

Writing apparatus can be basic. A note pad and pencil will suffice. Ideally they should be small enough to tuck in a shirt pocket so that you can scribble as soon as inspiration strikes.

Beyond providing a narrative of events a journal can also be a grab-bag for stray ideas and feelings, conversation bites, slander, rhyming couplets, recipes—just about anything. On most trips there will be flashes of self-discovery and reminiscence as well as the occasional weird dream or brooding animosity. The privacy of a journal means that you can let rip without fear or favour. And when you're long gone your grandchildren will have hours of stimulating reading.



● Spotting wildlife

These days we are spoilt by lavish nature documentaries that reveal the intimate secrets of many creatures. A morning spent trying to track down a bird in a forest canopy or a wallaby in a rocky gorge can be frustrating by comparison. Still, there is nothing quite like the primal thrill of seeing wildlife face to face.

The skills necessary are fairly straightforward. Patient observation is the key. Your best chance is to stake out a likely place, such as a shady waterhole or well-grassed clearing, and find a vantage point where you can be inconspicuous. In other words, it helps if you're an amateur sleuth with a high tolerance for sloth.

Birds always have a way of making their presence felt and budding twitchers are well served with detailed guides such as *The Graham Pizzey & Frank Knight Field Guide to the Birds of Australia*. Mammals tend to be more elusive. If you can find tracks (easier in sandy terrain), droppings, resting places and burrows, it's a good idea to return to the scene at dusk. For serious marsupial-spotting explore likely haunts at night with a powerful headtorch.

Apart from birds, the creatures you're most likely to bump into during the day are assorted reptiles. In stony country keep an eye out for basking lizards like skinks and dragons. Fortunately, snakes tend to be more secretive, though sooner or later they will give you cause to feel grateful for having an eye trained to spot things in the bush! ●

Quentin Chester (see Contributors in *Wild* no 3) writes regularly about going bush. He is the co-author of *The Outdoor Companion*, *The Kimberley-Horizons of Stone* and *Australia's Wild Islands*. His most recent book, *The Wild Calling*, includes several stories that first appeared in his column in *Wild*. The Wild Life.



Vanishing Falls

James Rusk visits this almost mythical Tasmanian destination

emerging from the boggy-floored forest of myrtle and pandani we admired the run-off from a lake cascading into a dark pool and disappearing into a sink-hole. The open, lush landscape and a warming sun were welcome changes for us. We spent the afternoon on the rocky banks of the lake exploring the surrounding scrub and planning the next day's route up the imposing

It doesn't take much imagination to sense the power of such a mighty cascade—Vanishing Falls. All photos David Wilson

mountain towering in the background. It was the first day of our planned 12-day bushwalking trip to Vanishing Falls.

The first European to see Vanishing Falls was Lloyd Jones in his Tiger Moth, probably in 1947. He told the geologist Professor Carey and others of the falls and how the water disappeared below them to reappear some distance down the valley; most were sceptical. The first confirmed visit to Vanishing Falls was in November 1973 by Jeanette Collin and Atila Vrana of the Manuka Club. It is an awesome waterfall, about 50 metres high. When the river level is low, several 'ribbons' of water cascade down but a high level produces one big torrent.

The members of our team were aged from 18 to 51 and each had a different level of experience. We had prepared ourselves physically for the trip but were aware that its length, remoteness and difficulty would also be a new and demanding mental challenge. Because of the absence of tracks and vast areas of impenetrable horizontal scrub, very few bushwalkers have reached Vanishing Falls.

After a demanding climb through steep and dense scrubland past several cliffs and a hidden waterfall, we drank from scattered pools on a saddle between another peak and the first mountain. Bad weather was approaching from the coast. We pushed up a natural, rocky ramp to the ridge just before rain and poor visibility set in. Early in the afternoon we set up camp because white-out conditions and drizzle prevented any further progress.

We rose the next morning to surprising and spectacular views of ranges and mountains enveloped in a glowing display of brilliant colour above the cloud level.

The true nature of our task soon became evident as we picked our way along the range away from the first mountain. Three knobs were exposed. We gained a distinct perspective of the challenge that lay ahead. It was demoralising and almost incomprehensible to think that these few kilometres of bushwalking across the knobs would take us two to three days. We had been informed that there was little or no water on the knobs. Each of us filled wine bladders with ten to twelve litres of water from the many tarns on the mountain. This made some rucksacks as heavy as 36 kilograms. However, we were keen and set off towards the first knob.

On the summit of the first knob Darren climbed a celery-top pine to determine a route up the second knob through the least scrubby terrain. He saw a rousing 360° panorama which clearly showed the way ahead including our objective, Vanishing Falls. It was a small but sweet reward for five hours' toil from the first mountain's ridge. We quickly became accustomed to weaving through the horizontal scrub in closed forest with little sunlight. The myrtle beeches and sodden earth were covered with moss and lichen. We pushed through the jungle. Layers of branches collapsed beneath our feet. On the ascent of the first knob we forced our way through woody scrub of pandani, tea-tree and scoparia,

sometimes breaking through to exposed, rocky outcrops.

Our physical and mental capabilities were strained to the limit by our slow progress and excessive rucksack weights. Our high-energy, lightweight meals were already cooked and then dehydrated; this saved valuable fuel and lessened the weight we had to carry.

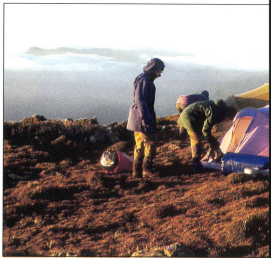
From the first knob Darren picked out a flat area with patches of low-level scrub on the saddle below. It was a slow slog down the knob that afternoon. We were fortunate to come across a small clearing with sufficient space for two tents. More importantly, the clearing had a pool of water but its quality was degraded when layers of silt were stirred up by our plastic drinking tubes. We would now have enough water until we reached the first river. Swirling clouds began to engulf the knobs as we set up camp and devoured our soup and macaroni meal.

An eerie fog prevented an early start to our ascent of the second knob. At 11.30 am, after two hours' struggle, we finally reached the summit which is covered with myrtle and dead pandani. We were deprived of views but were optimistic about our progress. We again resorted to tree-climbing to make sure of our way ahead. From here the intensity of the horizontal scrub forced us to climb over branches or even crawl on all fours to negotiate a way. The laborious and energy-sapping route and the difficult pushes through head-high, woody scrub were frustrating and demoralising.

‘Our physical and mental capabilities were strained to the limit.’

Late in the afternoon, after half an hour of searching for test spaces, we were finally forced to squeeze our shelter into the encroaching forest-jungle-tangle. It was New Year's Eve and we lifted our spirits by treating ourselves to Bailey's fudge, marzipan and a special rice meal. We had travelled only 1.2 kilometres in ten hours of walking, and were resigned to the fact that at least another exhausting day would be required to reach the river. Previous groups were said to have covered only 75 metres an hour in the day to come. Therefore we were apprehensive. However, we felt confident of our ability to bushwalk through difficult terrain as a team. Darren and David had the best power-to-weight ratios and were the trail-blazers, finding a way for us all to follow. A Global Positioning System, in conjunction with topographical maps and a compass, was essential for fixing our position as the nearly impenetrable vegetation blocked our view.

Early on the morning of day three we saw Vanishing Falls again and were able to refocus on our objective and clearly see the descent to the river. The third knob had a small, rocky cliffline from which we could view these points and other wonders. As we painfully conquered each successive knob we were given a new perspective. We would

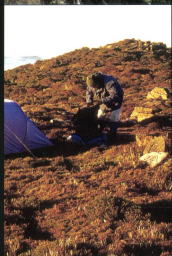
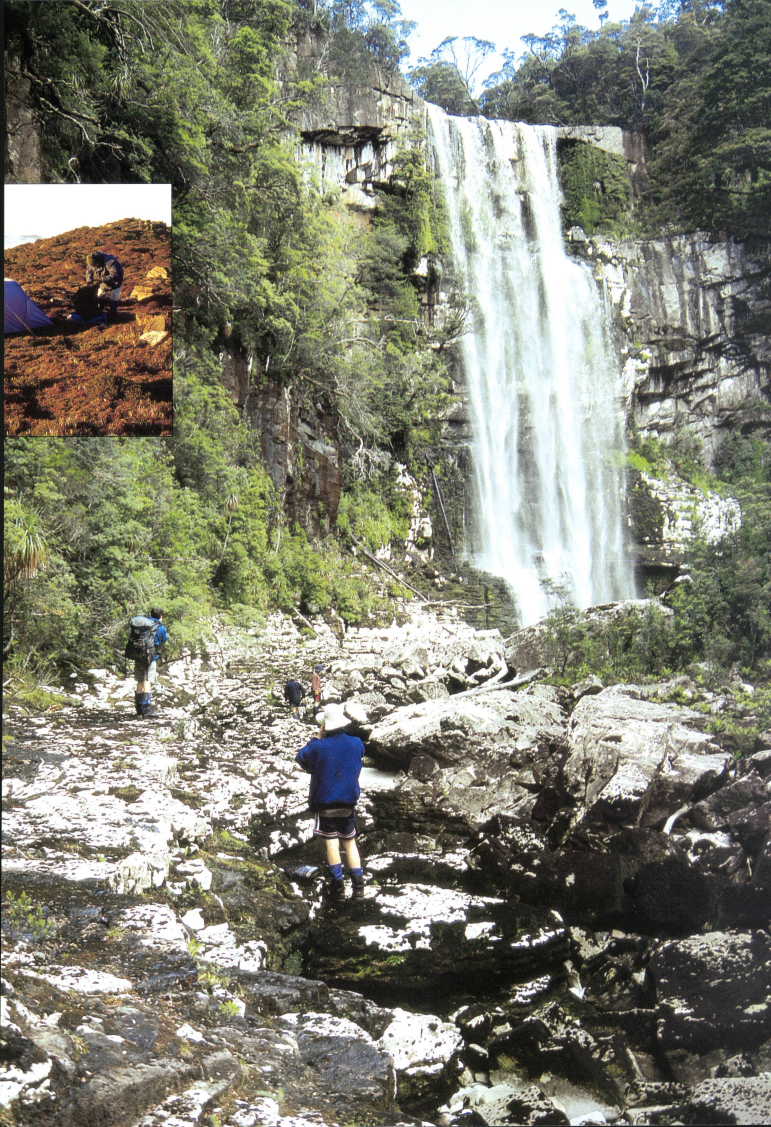


White-out conditions forced a premature, ridge-top camp. When the weather lifted it was possible to reassess our position. Right, the awesome sight of Vanishing Falls plummeting 50 metres to a dark pool before disappearing beneath the boulder-strewn river bed in the foreground.

have to ascend a small fourth knob before beginning a steep descent to the river. On the descent, the dangers of the terrain became obvious. With extreme caution slippery moss slopes, at times as difficult as rockclimbs, were negotiated while carrying heavy rucksacks. A simple slip could have become a major disaster. There were no escape routes on this trip and the chances of rescue were nil.

The descent from the fourth knob was painfully long but finally the terrain changed from mossy horizontal scrub to fern-laden slopes and large trees. By 5 pm on the fifth afternoon the scrub changed for the worse—swampy ground with more horizontal scrub. We felt great relief when we heard the sound of the river although our exhaustion muffled the joy of reaching the watercourse.

The next day a 15 kilometre round trip to Vanishing Falls turned out to be more demanding than expected. We rock hopped across the river, waded next to its scrubby banks and were forced to zigzag for suitable routes, making many 'hairy' crossings. As you approach Vanishing Falls by this route the banks are lined with smooth rocks and brilliant ferns. One kilometre from the falls the water suddenly disappears. There are interesting pools of crystal-clear cave water and the sharp banks soon become sheer, red cliffs. We followed a dry, rocky stream bed lined with brilliant ferns. Our apprehension grew as we climbed huge, limestone boulders. We then became enraptured by the sound of falling water. A fine spray filled the air and



our excitement increased as we climbed over the last, white boulders to reach our goal. We took in the phenomenal sight of the 50 metre waterfall plummeting over an amphitheatre of rock before we hurriedly searched for vantage points to capture the moment on film. Six days of struggle and uncertainties had brought us to a waterfall with many distinctive and mysterious features. Nature is the icon of God; it was a spiritual experience.

White rocks line the huge, ten metre deep, black pool. The water disappears into a limestone cave system before re-emerging. On our reluctant return to camp we ventured into the dark zone of a cave. In 1992 an expedition was taken by helicopter to Vanishing Falls to survey the cave system.

Our trip out along the river over precariously wet and smooth rocks was tedious. Some of us waded in the river up to our waist to avoid injury. We became wary of the many jet-black tiger snakes and green whip snakes sunning themselves along the wide, rock-strewn banks. Progress remained frustrating with each new obstacle the river presented. Camp number seven was established just before the junction of this river and a second one.

As we continued down the second river, log-jams made any prospect of Liloing impossible.

Finally, with dry sacks (containing all our gear) bobbing in tow, we stroked our way down the river. At times the sun shone through the clouds and overhanging trees but the water was bitterly cold. Kristian devised the best method of Liloing by lying on his dry sack on top of his Lilo. Unbeknown to any team members, Michael's Lilo had developed a small leak and his dry sack had a small but significant hole. After more than two hours of paddling it was time for a break. On the muddy and heavily wooded bank we landed our craft and all felt a sudden chill. The holes in Michael's Lilo and dry sack were discovered. His mental state was precarious and he was unable to take off his wet clothes. He had great difficulty in organising his thoughts, his speech was slurred and he was shivering. He managed to put on his wet Gore-Tex but was unable to communicate and we realised that his condition was serious. We quickly changed some of his clothes and got him into a sleeping-bag. As Michael's condition was quickly deteriorating, Kristian took off some layers of clothing and got into the sleeping-bag. We then lit a stove to heat some soup and within 15 minutes Michael was able to sip some of it through a plastic drinking tube. Kristian monitored Michael's condition until it was stable.

Hypothermia is insidious. The body imperceptibly cools and you begin to shiver. Soon your central nervous system begins to close down. You lose the ability to make logical decisions and to exhibit well-learned behaviours. Swift action is essential.

The journey over the knobs had been made in a strange silence. We rarely saw or heard any bird life. There were very few animal tracks and the bushwalking was free of leeches. For six days we had not seen

any sign of humans passing through the wilderness: no tracks, no marker tapes, no footprints, no rubbish or broken branches.

Closer to a large lagoon the bird life was prolific. A sea eagle soared above us, a reminder of our proximity to the coast. On the push towards it we moved easily through dry scrub on a natural pathway created by many fallen trees. After a three-hour struggle we emerged from the rainforest.

was able to modify his walking style to complete the journey.

The Cessna turned sharply over the ocean before sweeping down along the beach. Abruptly cresting the sand-dunes, we saw a lone bushwalker look up in surprise, just as we had done a few days earlier.

From our bird's-eye view, the landscape was truly breathtaking. Looking out over



We were eager to descend into the challenge that lay ahead.

While we lunched nearby we greeted a party of bushwalkers. We marched freely past black swans, tiger snakes and across river inlets. That afternoon we relaxed. The area had a beautiful ambience of colour and natural features that free the spirit. A dip in the lagoon refreshed the body, followed by drinks of coffee and rounds of cards on the warming sand. Two single-engine Cessnas gracefully swept up over the sand-dunes. Potoroos and Bennett's wallabies inquisitively foraged around our camp-site.

Once we came into contact with numerous walkers we felt a sense of security—but also alarm at the environmental impact of many walkers widening the frequent bogs. Kristian turned his ankle along the flat tree-plain of the track. It was fortunate that this had not happened three days into the bushwalk. We stopped at a creek to cool his swollen ankle before strapping it, and he

the country through which we had travelled highlighted that there are very few points from which to gain your bearings.

The stark, white, limestone cliffs surrounding Vanishing Falls draw attention to the wonder of the water's disappearing act. Circling the falls a few times we felt euphoric. To us this natural display is the jewel in the crown of Tasmania's hidden beauty. As our flight continued, the horizontal scrub promptly drew the curtain on a magical finale to our trip.

Our wilderness flight was a graceful way to experience the landscape. By retracing our steps, we felt that we had achieved a more complete perspective of this area of Tasmanian wilderness. We had gained a greater respect for the rugged terrain and scrub, and had been rewarded by the many hidden, natural wonders of a challenging bushwalk.

James Rusk actively enjoys the challenges of bushwalking, caving and rockclimbing. He has achieved the Queen's Scout award, ventures deep into places like the Flinders Ranges and Nullarbor Plain caves and studies environmental science at Adelaide University.

wild conservation

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Bob Brown

Australia's best-known environmental crusader; by *Geoff Law*

Bob Brown, under an ever-present media gaze, doing what he does best; passionately yet eloquently stirring the faithful to action. *Geoff Law*

There was an end-of-school atmosphere in the Australian Parliament. Normal sittings had been suspended so that members could be addressed by the visiting President of the USA, Bill Clinton. Security had been tightened, special passes issued, and members of Parliament of all persuasions chatted amiably before taking their seats and listening in attentive silence to the words of the president.

President Clinton covered a variety of issues from the environment to regional stability including the role of China. He said that he would soon meet the Premier of China to discuss a range of strategic questions. Suddenly there was an interjection.

'What about a free Tibet?'

The president took the interruption in his stride, but Australian parliamentarians turned in angry embarrassment to shush the culprit,

Australian Greens Senator Bob Brown. Later, having run the gauntlet of several accusing colleagues, the senator quietly gatecrashed a line of MPs being introduced to President Clinton by Prime Minister John Howard, and managed to raise the issue again, much to the chagrin of his colleagues.

That evening Brown chuckled as he recalled the shock of his parliamentary colleagues at having been disgraced in front of such an important person.

'One of them said he was going to punch my lights out', Brown recounted with mock indignation. Then he became serious. 'I refuse to be a part of their club.'

'The club' is Brown's description of the prevailing atmosphere in the Senate. The rule of 'the club' seems to be that you don't rock the boat; and that there are certain issues that you simply do not raise. Brown's

unwillingness to observe such conventions has frequently upset the equilibrium of his senatorial colleagues.

In October 1996, for example, he entered the chamber wearing a shirt and tie but no jacket. This omission was in breach of the unwritten dress code required of male senators. There was a brief uproar, and Brown was loudly rebuked by some of the more conservative members. In 1997 Brown sought the Senate's leave to have Aboriginal spokesperson Michael Mansell speak in his place during the debate over native title. Leave was refused. The same fate befell his moves to replace the Senate's routine recital of antiquated prayers with a more universally applicable statement and period for reflection.

Yet Brown has also had his share of wins. In 1996 the Senate supported his motion



calling for self-determination for the people of East Timor. One year later it supported his move for a special committee to look at ways of diverting subsidies for fossil fuels into solar power. Also in 1997, Brown cast the deciding vote for the Constitutional Convention which has since opened the way for Australia to become a republic. In doing so he broke one of the more bizarre deadlocks in the Senate's history, in which the pro-republican Labor Party and Australian Democrats were voting against the convention, and the partly anti-republican Coalition was voting for it.

Yet Brown remains frustrated with the Senate, particularly at the way issues of importance to him—whether it be the fate of Australia's forests or the rights of indigenous Tibetans—are swept aside. He still disowns 'the club'. Their attitude is not to put

anything personal on the line at all—for anybody', he says.

Brown has been putting his personal beliefs on the line for the last 20 years. During the campaign to protect Tasmania's wilderness he has been abused, ridiculed, threatened, assaulted and imprisoned. Yet he has also helped to win amazing community support for the issues he has championed.

Becoming a senator has not deterred him from taking these issues back to the streets. If anything, the tedium, trivia and frustrations of the Senate seem to have spurred him on. Since July 1996 Brown has spoken at countless rallies and attended direct-action protests at Kakadu, on the Tasmanian waterfront, and in front of the oncoming limousine of Prime Minister John Howard. His high profile puts him in great demand among conservation groups.

In June 1997 he attended a protest in the Gooolgook forests of East Gippsland and was arrested and charged with 'obstructing a lawful forestry operation'. But he went on the attack. Before the court hearing, he and a staff member, Marg Blakers, returned to the scene of the crime with a tape-measure. In subsequent hearings Brown's defence counsel, (Wild Publications director) Brian Walters, argued that the logging was not lawful because it had been carried out too close to a stream covered by Victoria's *Heritage Rivers Act*. The magistrate eventually dismissed the charge.

The result was not only a coup for the senator and fellow protesters charged with the same offence. It was also a great boost for embattled forest campaigners who could use the result to highlight the dubious basis

for all such logging operations in East Gippsland.

Turning adversity to advantage in this way is a common trait of Brown's campaigns.

The battle he led against the Franklin dam, for example, saved much more than the Franklin River. A World Heritage Area was created which bestowed national protection over a continuous tract of wild country from Cradle Mountain in Tasmania's north-west to South West Cape. The *World Heritage Properties Conservation Act* was passed in 1983 to save Tasmania's wild rivers. But since then it has also been used to save Queensland's wet tropics, forests threatened by wood-chipping, and the caverns of Tasmania's Exit Cave.

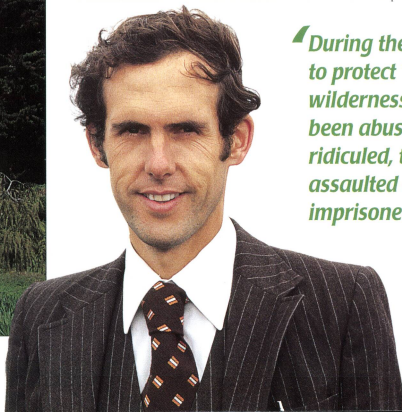
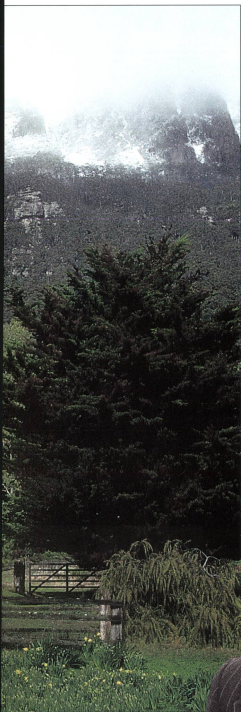
Adversity was turned to advantage again when Brown's own backyard came under threat. At the foot of Drys Bluff in the Great Western Tiers is Brown's retreat—a tiny, weatherboard cottage next to the Liffey River. Although Tasmania's World Heritage Area extends to his back fence, most of the adjoining forests are privately owned. In 1990 two of these blocks came under threat from wood-chipping. The usually impecunious campaigner had just been awarded the prestigious US Goldman prize for services to conservation. The \$40 000 prize money was used as a deposit to buy the threatened land.

But he was still \$200 000 short. With the bank snapping at his heels he began cobbling together a new conservation group to make up the balance. The Australian Bush Heritage Fund, which Brown chaired for its first seven years, now owns and manages nine properties of high conservation value in New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania. It relies on large donations and bequests from well-heeled folk who would rather see their money spent on property than on campaigns. (See Wild Information.)

The creation of this organisation is a classic example of Brown's leadership style. He'll frequently bite off more than he can chew and then inspire people to assist in

Left, Brown at home on the range or, at least, at Liffey below Tasmania's Great Western Tiers. A meeting here of the South-West Tasmania Committee in June 1976 set up the Tasmanian Wilderness Society (later known as the Wilderness Society). *Brown collection.* Below, young Bob' as Director of the Wilderness Society and Green MP. *Wilderness Society*

'During the campaign to protect Tasmania's wilderness he has been abused, ridiculed, threatened, assaulted and imprisoned.'



then inspire people to assist in bailing him out. He has a disconcerting knack of enticing otherwise sensible people to follow him into big trouble, whether it's an election campaign, a forest blockade or a daunting fund-raising effort.

Brown hasn't always been an environmental crusader. The third child of the local policeman, he grew up at Trunkley Creek, near Bathurst, in the conservative rural heartland of NSW. He voted for the Country Party as a young medical student.

But the outdoors always attracted him.

He remembers childhood walks where he came to know 'every tree, every rock and every snake' on the property of his uncle and aunt in the granite country of the New England plateau. He has vivid memories of the rugged, granite cliffs and canyons among which he and some relatives floundered on a failed expedition to find a local waterfall.

But it wasn't until he came to Tasmania that Brown really discovered his passion for bushwalking. He arrived in Launceston in 1972 to take up a position as a family doctor. That Boxing Day he and some friends headed south on a three-week trip from Cockle Creek along the south coast to Melaleuca and up the isolated Old River route to Federation Peak.

'It was three weeks of being up to our hocks in mud', he remembers. 'It was really hard going, but the country was fantastic. The clouds lifted while we were on Prion Beach with beautiful sunlit views of Pindars Peak and Precipitous Bluff.'

This sense of adventure was also being nourished by his search for the Tasmanian tiger. On weekends and holidays Brown and his companions, Jeremy Griffith and James Malley, travelled to the far corners of the State to interview old-timers, or set up baited trip-wires attached to flash cameras. They came away with a lot of photos of startled devils, possums, native cats and betongs, but no Tasmanian tiger.

Brown is convinced that the tiger is extinct but is scathing of the treatment of areas where sightings have occurred. The Florentine valley, for example, where the last six live tigers were caught in the 1930s, has been clear-felled from one side to the other.

'And that good sighting in the mid-1980s by a National Parks ranger in the north-west didn't stop one 1080 poison drop or one clear-fell coupe', he says.

Such attitudes drew Brown towards the increasingly high-profile conservation movement. He had flown over the threatened Lake Pedder; he'd been to campaign meetings; and in 1974 he stood as a United Tasmania Group candidate for the Senate. The UTG had been formed in 1972 at the height of the Pedder campaign. Its candidates provided voters with a pro-conservation platform as an alternative to the pro-dam sameness of the Tasmanian Liberal and Labor Parties. The UTG was, in fact, the world's first green party. Brown polled 112 votes in that 1974 election.

The likelihood of standing for Parliament again prompted him, in 1976, to announce publicly that he was gay. He was possibly

the first candidate for public office in Australia's history to do so. It was the beginning of what would become a courageous tradition of flouting the prevailing political orthodoxy.

Then came the decision that changed Brown's life forever. On the steps of the Launceston Public Library he met local forester Paul Smith, who invited him on a rafting trip down the Franklin River. Brown had never heard of the Franklin but agreed... And the river grabbed him by the scruff of his neck. He still describes the trip as the best two weeks of his life.

'I think I knew, even then, that I was caught. I'd been able to go to a few meetings of the Lake Pedder Committee or the UTG and pass some money on. And I was pretty solitary and just not all that keen on socialising... But the river was saying that you have to give up your comfortable life, or this place is gone. Take your pick. And how are you going to feel when you get older if you stay in your doctor's surgery and just let it happen?'

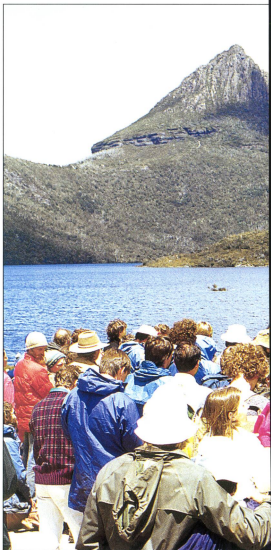
Brown's decision propelled him into a seven-year battle to save the Franklin River from inundation by a series of proposed hydroelectric dams. In August 1976 other campaigners—most of them veterans of the Lake Pedder Action Committee—gathered at Brown's house at Liffey to form the Tasmanian Wilderness Society. By 1979 Brown was the society's director and the spearhead of a campaign that turned Tasmanian politics upside down and irrevocably altered Australian federal-State relations. He became a seasoned and disciplined campaigner, well versed in all the methods of public debate from writing press releases to producing colour picture-books. He also experienced the first of several stints in gaol after being arrested while protesting in the riverside rainforest of Tasmania's South-west.

Brown's legacy of the Franklin River campaign was a parliamentary career—despite never having won an election campaign. In May 1982 he had stood for State Parliament again, this time as a 'no-dams' independent. He lost. But eight months later, at the height of the Franklin dam blockade, Australian Democrat MP Norm Sanders resigned from State Parliament in protest at the dam. Under the Tasmanian system, a 're-count' of Sanders's votes was undertaken. The seat went to Brown on 5 January 1983—the same day he was released from prison.

He served his first few years as an independent and was usually a sole voice for conservation in a Parliament dominated by then Liberal Premier Robin Gray. Alone, Brown opposed the expenditure of additional hundreds of millions of dollars on west coast hydro schemes. Alone, he opposed the growth of the State's voracious wood-chip export industry. And despite lack of encouragement from the Labor Party,

he pushed social reform including freedom of information legislation and—particularly relevant in view of the subsequent Port Arthur tragedy—gun laws. All were opposed by his Liberal and Labor colleagues.

But he didn't need their support for extra-parliamentary activities which included producing the high-quality picture-book *Lake Pedder*, campaigning for Queensland's Mt Etna caves, and attending forest protests such as the one at Farmhouse Creek, Tasmania, in March 1986.



Brown addressing a rally at Dove Lake, Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park, in December 1986 as part of a campaign to save the nearby Lemonythine Forest from wood-chipping. Rob Blakers

Then in 1989 there was a change in mood. The Tasmanian electorate reacted strongly against Premier Gray's attempt to give fast-track approval to a proposed pulp mill at Wesley Vale on the north coast of the State. The time was ripe for the creation of a new political force. During the escalating pulp-mill campaign Brown coordinated discreet inquiries to potential parliamentary candidates. Funds were sought. After a hard-fought campaign the mill was stopped, and when Gray announced a snap election

on the issue of State development, the Greens were ready. After the May 1989 State election the five Greens held the balance of power in the new Tasmanian Parliament.

The subsequent negotiation of the Labor-Green Accord was the culmination of Brown's conservation career in Tasmania. The accord doubled the size of Tasmania's World Heritage Area to include places like South Cape Bay, Farmhouse Creek, the Hartz Mountains, the Denison River, the Prince of Wales Range, the Walls of Jeru-

despite strong support for the environment in national opinion polls. It's as though there were a tacit agreement between Liberal and Labor to take green issues off the agenda by quietly acquiescing to industry demands. The Regional Forest Agreement in Tasmania, which allows unlimited wood-chipping in most of the State's eucalypt forests, is a classic example. Without Liberal-Labor confrontation to report, most mainstream media have simply turned their backs on the issue.


foreshore, you see that they've got a bulldozers-and-chainsaws approach. So do you confront it or just give up?

In fact, Brown is alarmed that public response is too meek and mild. For him, the price of 'civility'—whether in the Senate's 'club' or in society generally—is the right of people coming after us to enjoy the natural world as we can. The need for stronger action exercises his mind when considering how best to use what he sees as 'the decade or two' of activism remaining to him. (Brown is 54 years old.) He wonders how far to pursue politics, whether to be reflective and write more or whether to become even more defiant in the face of planetary vandalism.

For the time being Brown is focused on the national and international growth of the Greens. In February 1998 he returned, buoyant, from a trip to Europe and Mexico to visit burgeoning green parties there. He anticipates the day when Greens in Australia will be a part of government, as they are in France, and increasingly able to make decisions like those of Dominique Voynet, the green French Minister for the Environment, whose first act in office was to close down a fast-breeder nuclear reactor. He looks forward to the company of more green senatorial colleagues after the next federal election. In Tasmania he can see the future enlargement of the World Heritage Area to include the Tarkine, the Great Western Tiers, the forest of the South-west and the rainforest of the west coast.

Such optimism may sit awkwardly next to Brown's starkly realistic assessment of the seriousness of the world's troubles. But he takes great heart from the success of previously ridiculed minorities such as the suffragettes and the antislavery campaigners. And he remembers the dark, dark days of the Franklin River campaign after Robin Gray swept to power in 1982. Brown had just lost his third election campaign, and the bulldozers were pushing into the Franklin valley.

The Liberal and Labor Parties wanted the dam. Both Houses of Parliament supported the dam. The unions wanted the dam. Big business wanted the dam. All three newspapers wanted the dam. Not a squeak out of the churches! But we kept going, and a year later, the river was safe.

This history has given Brown faith in humanity and in the future. But it's not a blind, passive faith. It's backed up—daily—by acts of defiance which challenge the complacency and apathy of our comfortable society—and appeal to our sense of adventure. 

Geoff Low has worked with Bob Brown for more than 16 years in the campaigns to protect Tasmania's wilderness and forests. He has witnessed at first hand the growth of the Greens. He is environmental adviser to the green senator.



saem, the Central Plateau, the Eldon Range, much of the Weld valley, and the lower Gordon catchment. The accord created the Douglas-Apsley National Park. It halted a proposed wood-chip mill on the edge of Tasmania's South-west wilderness. It closed and rehabilitated redundant roads and mines in the South-west.

Labor eventually broke the accord—by increasing wood-chipping of key old-growth forests—and an election was held in February 1992. Labor was given a thrashing and a new conservative government was elected. But the five Greens held their seats. And the achievements of the accord have endured.

The intervening six years have been tough. Governments at both State and federal levels have turned against conservation

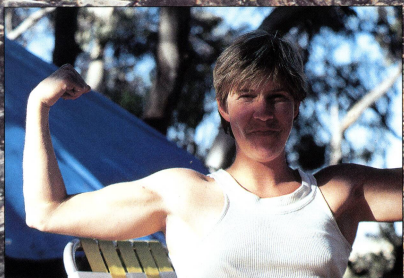
Since 1990 there have been increases in wood-chip exports; an ugly, gravel road has been carved through the Tarkine wilderness (see Brown's article in *Wild* no 65); the management plan for the World Heritage Area has been undermined; a new wood-chip mill has been built on the edge of the Tarkine; and a campaign to restore Lake Pedder has failed (for now).

Such a state of affairs might have driven some to despair. Brown, however, has simply stood his ground. He has become more determined and more provocative. When asked whether he's concerned about accusations that green protests may appear confrontational, he becomes cranky.

'It's the government and Labor Party that are confrontational. If you look at the forests, or the Jabiluka valley or the Hinchinbrook

You Won't Meet Any Nice Girls Out There

Jackie Kiewa shares the results of her survey of women in the outdoors



Above, ...but you might meet a few tough ones. (American rock climber Wendy White at Mt. Arapiles, Victoria.) *Michael Hampton*. Right, this one looks a little more approachable; in Serpentine Gorge, Macdonnell Ranges, Northern Territory. *Glenn Tempest*



many years ago, a good climbing friend told me his mother had warned him that, 'you won't meet any nice girls at the cliff'. This seemed to be true at the time (I was the only one and, although I'm nice, I was already married). However, this friend hit on a good strategy for testing out the calibre of his new girlfriends: while he didn't meet any at the cliff, he always took them climbing. He finally found one who seemed to like his strange sport; he married her.

Another friend related how he lost his brother as a climbing partner. As young, obsessed climbers, they spent every available spare moment at the cliff. One afternoon, however, after a long, hot and tiring day, my friend's brother announced: 'I'm sick of this! I want to go and meet some girls!' It was years before he returned to the climbing scene.

Times have changed. Today women are found everywhere—climbing, bushwalking, paddling, scuba-diving, mountain biking, sailing, surfing and skiing. We are still the minority, but I think we're up there in our achievements (well, maybe not I, but a lot of my female compatriots have done some admirable things). This is a wonderful thing for men, who are finding an ever growing pool of female companions who like to do what they do. Provided these men can cope with the fact that sometimes women can do it even better, things should work out very well.

I've always been fascinated by women who take up outdoors activities. Since I'm one of them this is probably an extension of my self-fascination. I want to know whether other women have had experiences similar to mine. Despite the increasing numbers, women active in the outdoors still have to face raised eyebrows and a sense of not quite fitting in. I can remember racing back (quite late) from climbing days at Frog Buttress in Queensland to collect my kids from school, and feeling out of place and horribly different from other mothers. My kids felt the same. After one holiday in New Zealand I gave my son a photo of me paddling over Maruia Falls (11 metres high). He proudly pasted it on the front cover of his exercise book but took it off again in response to the rubbing of his friends, who refused to believe it was a picture of his mum.

As a lecturer in outdoor education, I am actively encouraged to do research. So, what better research than to inquire into the nature of women who participate in the outdoors?

I wanted to know these women's attitude towards their bodies. I have always been particularly concerned about the statistics which indicate that most women feel bad about their bodies. One US study reported in 1993 that only six per cent of women felt satisfied with their bodies, and another study done in San Francisco found that up to 80 per cent of nine-year-old girls were organising their lives around the need to stay slim. These feelings of being unattractive have nothing to do with how attractive the women are in reality—models and film stars are no different from any other women in feeling bad about themselves.

So I thought I'd ask women who participated in outdoors recreational activities how they felt about their bodies. I sent questionnaires to 371 women; 224 replied. These women were scattered throughout Australia and New Zealand. They followed a wide range of outdoors pursuits including climbing, white-water paddling, scuba-diving, skiing, bushwalking (or tramping), sailing, caving and cycling. Almost half took part in their activity at least once a week.

'What don't you like about your body?' Women immediately focused on their appearance, and said things like:

My inability to lose some weight.

The flabby bits.

My bottom and thighs—takes a lot of work to keep them in some sort of shape.

Too short; thighs unattractive; very self-conscious of upper legs; cellulite.

Being overweight. Breasts too big.

Flat chest.

GOING SOLO

Profile of a solo woman adventurer, by Naomi Peters

forty-four-year-old Liz Wood goes on an extended solo bushwalk every year, barely pauses during 24-hour rogaines and jogs up a hill twice a week...yet she claims that she is an ordinary housewife!

In 1998 Wood climbed the 23 highest peaks in Australia in four-and-a-half days when she walked solo from Mt Jagungal to Perisher in the Snowy Mountains. The year before, she walked, rode by bike and kayaked from Mt Kosciuszko to the sea. She said that it was tough and admitted that she hadn't cycled cross-country before, nor had she done any kayaking previously (except for one river-paddle and Eskimo roll practices in a pool). In 1996 she walked from Kiandra to Mt Kosciuszko.

Wood's first extended solo bushwalk came about when she'd lined up a bushwalk with some women and they couldn't go—so she went alone. That was in 1995 when she walked for one week along what she considers 'the best stretch' of the Australian Alps Walking Track, from Mt Clear to the 'dry Barnes'.

She now likes to plan a big solo venture each year. (Walking solo) is a different experience; you can't share it. I don't do a lot of thinking. I'm inclined to enjoy the place, the environment, where I am.

Her family helps her by picking her up, dropping her off and providing encouragement; her husband Tony also does the logistics. When she made her way from Mt Kosciuszko

to the sea, Tony and their two daughters were her support crew. They even put a string across the beach for her to run through!

Asked how she developed her outdoors skills, Wood said by 'doing it'. Living in Albury on the New South Wales and Victorian border, she says that it is easy to go up into the mountains. 'We're lucky because we live close to Mts Bogong and Feathertop. We have done a lot of the Australian Alps Walking Track in bits and pieces.'

A social worker by occupation, Wood has always been interested in the outdoors. She grew up on a farm, had many animals and did a lot of sailing. More than ten years ago her husband introduced her to orienteering, which she says is her favourite outdoors activity and is a good family sport. Their whole family participates.

Rogaining was an extension of orienteering. 'Rogaining with Tony can be quite competitive. We are wiser now—we know what we need, how fast to go, what clothes to wear, what food to eat.' Both always navigate. Her husband says Wood isn't fast but is good at endurance.

Wood has competed in a variety of orienteering/rogaining events in most Australian States. She and a partner have been the Australian and New South Wales mixed open champions, and the Victorian mixed veteran champions.

The list of achievements is not important to her; she just participates because she likes it.



Solo adventurer extraordinaire
Liz Wood. Naomi Peters

Sixty per cent of the women said that they were highly committed to it. Their ages ranged from under 20 to over 60 though only three women surveyed were in their sixties.

In general, most of these women felt really good about their bodies: 65 per cent were satisfied, or very satisfied with their bodies. This is in complete contradiction to the aforementioned studies. So, why are these women different? The clue appears to lie in a change of focus. Their satisfaction seemed to depend on how they were thinking of themselves. I asked the question:

The focus changed when I asked: 'What do you like about your body?' Very few women said anything about their appearance. Instead, they began to talk about what their bodies do for them, and how they enjoy the strength and fitness of their bodies:

Strong legs and shoulders.

Being able to do physical things competently. It can meet the daily demands I place on it.

Being capable and achieving most physical challenges I set myself.

Strong, reliable, sturdy.

In other words, these women were generally happy with their bodies because of

their strength and competence. Whenever they concentrated on their looks, they felt bad about themselves like other women in the Western world. But these outdoors women had been able to make some kind of switch in focus, so that they didn't spend so much time agonising over unrealistic expectations.

They also suggested that their participation in outdoors activities had helped them to feel good about themselves:

I am good at climbing and skiing. This makes me feel good about my body.

With satisfaction of being able to perform these activities, the simpler factors of body shape do not seem to be of concern.

In my 20s I agonised over my failings in the body stakes. My talent in rockclimbing made me realise that my body was strong, competent, capable, and helped me to become satisfied with my body.

I no longer feel the same pressure to conform to the popular ideal. I've always had big arms and a big torso. Now I like them.

Outdoors activity takes one's focus off oneself and on to the activity at hand. Positive output—not inward focus on real or imagined faults.

Today, there is so much pressure on women, particularly on young women, to be preoccupied with their appearance that these results seem to be a breath of fresh

air. And—dare I say it?—perhaps the ability to change focus is becoming just as important for men, who are also being encouraged to think more of how they look than of what they can do! I hope that the power of the outdoors can combat those parts of the media which are telling us that how we look in the outdoors (in our Lycra and fleece) is more important than the things we do.

I also asked these women how they felt about being a woman. I'm pleased to relate that 83 per cent said that they 'usually' or 'always' felt good about being a woman. These are the things which women enjoy: above all, as women we like to think in ways which are nurturing and cooperative. We also find the physical aspects of being a woman agreeable: we enjoy having babies and being mothers. We like to dress up and look attractive and draw attention. We gain satisfaction from being strong and competent and not conforming to stereotypes. We also love being allowed to be emotional and expressive within our relationships and friendships.

There are some unpleasant aspects, however. Although we like being able to have babies, we hate the pain and inconvenience of menstruation, and people often seem to think that mothers don't need adventures. It's fun to flout the stereotypes but at times it is just too difficult and we find ourselves being put in a box and having to stay there. Being female means carrying extra weight, being shorter and being weaker than men—all these factors mean that it's harder to keep up with the guys. And while we often enjoy getting attention from men, sometimes this attention is totally unwanted, especially when it's threatening—quite a few women expressed their fears of violence and rape.

These are difficult realities which all women have to face, but the women in my study seemed to face them quite cheerfully. As I said before, most liked being women—quite a few mentioned how much more difficult life must be with all that testosterone racing around the body!

In all, I found my faith in the outdoors woman to be totally justified. Not only are there more of us out there, but we're intelligent, mentally healthy and emotionally balanced! What a wonderful group! ☺

Jackie Kiewa lectures in outdoor education at Griffith University in Brisbane. She juggles the demands of work, family and fun (sometimes these even overlap), and spends every spare moment playing in the wilderness—climbing, paddling or walking.

We like to succeed but that's not the only reason [we participated].

On the subject of her body, Wood commented that it was too fat: 'I could just be slimmer all over, really! What does she like about her body?' It is a strong body, capable and healthy. She is moderately satisfied with it, and is grateful that she doesn't have knee and ankle problems as a result of her running. 'I could well do without boobs now they've had their primary usefulness—feeding babies!'

Wood says that her participation in outdoors activities has 'undoubtedly' helped her to feel good about herself.

She loves being a woman. 'I think that women have got, particularly in big endurance things that I do...greater endurance, strength of determination, staying power or something, and I'm pleased to be a woman in that respect—and I love being a mother.' She says that women also get some form of recognition from doing outdoors activities and being reasonably successful; she rather likes that.

In response to being asked if she has felt 'out of place' or 'different from other women', Wood replied that she mainly mixes with women who do 'outdoorsy' things. 'At times, compared to others [outdoors women], I feel inadequate.'

She considers that her strengths are independence, confidence, self-assurance and a belief in her ability to cope with whatever comes up. 'I've got this determination. It's just like rogaining—however tough it is, I just keep going...I'm just determined and can get there.'

Noomi Peters is the editor of Wild and Rock. Her favourite experiences have been to canyon and climb in the Blue Mountains, explore Vietnam on two wheels and fly over South-west Tassie. Originally from Albury-Wodonga, she now lives in Melbourne.

Karen Tempest on the Razorback, Mt Feather-top, Victoria. Glenn Tempest



folio

Small creatures

Up close with *Wes Tolhurst*

Tree frog.
Page 45,
butterfly wing.



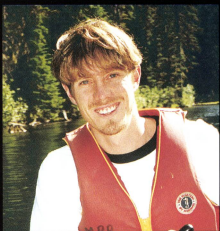






Above, southern yellow robin.

Left, baby honey-possum.




Wes Tollhurst is a youth director with the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He enjoys cycling, fishing as a sport and anything associated with the outdoors. He lives at Lake Macquarie in New South Wales.

One Long Day

Mt Bogong to Mt Feathertop, in a day!

By Glenn van der Knijff



A man with short reddish hair, wearing a blue t-shirt with a circular logo, dark shorts, and brown hiking boots, stands on a dirt path. He is holding a wide-brimmed hat in his left hand. To his left is a purple backpack. The background features a large, forested mountain under a clear sky.

Standing atop Mt Bogong at 2 am on a cool Sunday morning in January, I couldn't help but let my thoughts wander to the previous morning when we had arrived at Mountain Creek car park. Rain had looked imminent and the camping area seemed full of runners preparing for the Bogong to Hotham Run. We had hastily set up camp to beat the rain and had crawled into bed. Our plan was to leave the tent no later than 4 am and embark on a day walk longer than either Jodie or I had ever undertaken. The trip of nearly 70 kilometres would take us from the car park, over Mt Bogong and the Bogong High Plains, to the West Kiewa River and Mt Feathertop before ending at Harrietville. It was a daunting prospect.

The rain held off until half an hour before our scheduled start. Our greatest enemies were rain and wet feet—or so we thought. Jodie agreed that we should postpone the start of our walk until Saturday evening when, we hoped, the weather would improve.

After a relaxing day Michael (our cabbie for the weekend) delivered us back to the Mountain Creek car park at 11 pm. He wished us good luck, and we were on our way.

Hardly a cloud was in the sky but the humidity was visible in the form of a thick haze which hung in the valleys.

On Diamantina Spur, dwarfed by the imposing bulk of Mt Feathertop. All photos (except the author's self-portrait) Ralph Gails

We were in good spirits while walking along the Mountain Creek track. It was a relief to be moving at last. Near midnight we paused briefly at the final creek crossing, gulping down large quantities of water and replenishing our supplies before beginning the climb up the Staircase Spur.

As the forest closed in around us the sultry air seemed to wrap around me like a warm blanket, and soon I was perspiring freely. I was thankful that I was only carrying a large bum-bag. Jodie, too, was travelling light, toting a small rucksack with a large water-carrying capacity.

Being well rested, we fairly flew up the lower section of the spur and it was just half an hour after midnight when we stopped for a breather and a drink at Bivouac Hut.

Higher up on the spur, where the trees are more stunted, the ground was well lit. In fact, we had hardly used our headtorches since starting out!

We walked away from the tree line, followed the well-worn track round Castor and Pollux and climbed up the track into a cooling breeze. For the first time I began to feel cold and the heavy glaze of dew on the ground began to soak into my runners, but I wasn't going to stop until I got to the top. Passing a memorial cairn to three skiers who had died high on the mountain, I wondered whether we would become a statistic, too. But looking around at the bright sky, I thought not.

Just before 2 am, we topped out at the summit cairn.

The view from the top of Mt Bogong was wonderful. An almost full moon and the predominantly clear sky meant that we could see in every direction. I was surprised to see a tent on the summit, but assumed that its inhabitant had some connection with the Bogong to Hotham Run which was to begin at daybreak.

After a three-hour climb I was somewhat hungry but I had only a handful of so-called 'health' bars. I bit into one and my stomach immediately churned; I found it almost indigestible so only ate half of it. Jodie had no trouble eating her health bar and seemed quite at ease.

Towards the Hooker Plateau, my feet soon became wet in the short, tufty and saturated grass and I looked forward to reaching the dry fire tracks further on. On reaching Quartz Knob an eerie fog crept up from the Big River valley and enveloped us.

Lower down on Quartz Ridge the thick fog blocked the moonlight and we navigated with torches. As we became more tired we grew silent, the only noises breaking the

night-time silence were our footsteps, the crackling of twigs and heavy breathing. We had to negotiate a couple of small knolls on the lower section of Quartz Ridge but on passing these my headtorch ceased to work. We were fortunate that Jodie's torch worked sufficiently well for me to walk safely about ten metres in front of her.

At the bank of the Big River Jodie's torch shone brightly on a convenient set of stepping-stones. On reaching the other side we almost fell on to a tent pitched precariously close to the river.

It is said that the darkest hour is just before the dawn—this was certainly the case in the depths of the Big River valley.



She must respect her boots more than her feet! (Crossing the West Kiewa River)

We soon passed the turn-off to Cairn Creek Hut and a few muscle-tearing and limb-shattering falls later we stepped on to the Big River fire track, not far from Bogong Creek Saddle. The walking immediately became easier. There was virtually no damp scrub to battle through and we were able to keep up a decent speed on the relatively wide track.



Climbing out of the valley I lacked enthusiasm, but Jodie put the pace on and I struggled to keep up for a while. Higher up, after rounding one of the many hairpin bends on the Big River fire track, my spirits lifted as the first hint of daylight appeared on the eastern horizon. My tiredness slowly diminished and I began to enjoy the walk. Passing below Timms Lookout the sun made its first appearance. Here I developed a stomach-ache and wondered whether I would even make the halfway point of the walk. A relieving belch or two did the trick and I hastened to catch up to Jodie, who was bolting ahead. We were heading directly towards the sun and it cast long shadows in our wake. The cool mountain air and the fresh scent of eucalyptus and wild flowers provided us with a boost of energy that we optimistically hoped would last for the rest of the day.

We stopped by some large rocks on the side of the track near where Timms Spur joins the Bogong High Plains. We both had painful feet so we changed into dry socks and ate some food before continuing.

We made our planned call by mobile phone to Michael at Falls Creek at 7 am as we passed by the turn-off to Ropers Hut. 'You're having what? Bacon and eggs for breakfast? That's not what we want to hear, Michael.' He agreed to meet us with some salad sandwiches near Cope Hut at about 11 o'clock.

We were now following the Australian Alps Walking Track, and would continue to do so until we reached snow-pole number 333, near Mt Jim. It was delightfully cool as we passed by Mts Nelse North and Nelse,

but the temperature rose gradually as we descended into the large, natural and almost treeless bowl known as the Park.

We turned off the Big River fire track not far beyond the Park where it enters the forest and followed a relatively new section of the Australian Alps Walking Track. The pleasant track, albeit a little damp in places, meanders aimlessly in a southerly direction eventually to join East Langford Aqueduct. Here we sat down and tended to our sore feet once again.

The level aqueduct track weaved in and out of a number of small gullies on the way to Langford Gap—half past nine and we were halfway. Not bad timing, I thought, and calculated that we would reach Harrietville at about 6 pm provided everything went well.



Glenn van der Knijff

is a keen bushwalker, cross-country skier and alpine historian. A qualified cartographer, he has worked for well known but now defunct Victorian map and guidebook publisher Algonia Publications. He spent eight years at *Wild* before joining the staff at *Lonely Planet*.

trils or ears. We had nearly forgotten about our feet by now; a combination of successful taping, drying out, and fresh socks was doing the job. We were walking strongly as we approached Mt Bundara and I felt that we would easily make Harrietville by 6 pm.

With a strange feeling of being followed, I turned to see the gangly form of a speeding competitor rapidly bearing down on us. As he came closer I realised that I knew him. Moving out of his way, I yelled 'G'day, Robin'. He passed by in a blur of speed, but he responded casually between puffs: 'Hi, Glenn, just doing the second half of the run today. I'll see if I can catch the front runner. Bye.' He disappeared in the distance and we continued to pole 333.

The runners turned south from here, heading for Mt Hotham. We continued east over a small rise to a high point well above the West Kiewa River. Mt Feathertop still looked far off, but it was only a quarter past one, so we were still making good time.

Dropping down the open slope into the tree line, I became aware that Jodie's condition was not 100 per cent, and for the first time she began to fall behind. I waited for her where the track begins to descend somewhat more steeply. She walked with a definite limp and explained that her left knee was becoming increasingly painful and made a grinding sound when she walked. Her movement was obviously restricted.

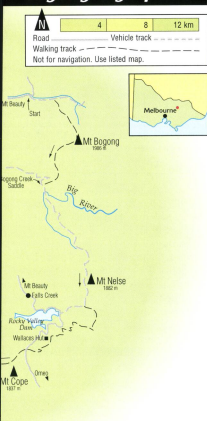
We arrived at Westons Hut about 45 minutes later after making our way through a confusing network of cattle tracks, and promptly plonked ourselves down.

Continuing beyond the hut, everything seemed fine for a while, but Jodie's knee slowly got worse. The track begins to level out and at the far end of a park-like clearing we could make out Blairs Hut.

A sign on the door advised us not to enter the hut as the inside had apparently been damaged by fire. We filled our drinking containers and hit the West Kiewa logging road for a two kilometre bash to the base of Diamantina Spur. It was pleasant to walk along the road as it slowly headed down the valley, and fortunately this was not too stressful on Jodie's knee. At the signpost indicating the walking track up Diamantina Spur we gathered our strength and at 3.15 pm prepared for the stiff climb ahead. I knew the route was going to be steep and difficult (I had walked down this spur some 12 years earlier) but I had forgotten just how tortuous the climb was, and soon I was perspiring heavily. The track was not only incredibly steep, but it climbed up some small, damp chutes and over a series of rocky outcrops which could easily lead to a nasty fall; this was real mountain-goat country.

Jodie is not one to complain; she hardly said a word on the climb while I, forgetting about her knee and being more concerned with my own welfare, bolted ahead. But I could tell that she was not happy—our pace had slowed quite a bit—and when we topped out on the narrow, rocky knoll high

bogong high plains



Guided by the aqueduct we were able to let our minds and thoughts wander for a while. Only the irritating buzz and drone of flies kept us in touch with the real world. We passed the side track to Wilkinsons Lodge and Wallaces Hut and shortly after were surprised to see Michael walking towards us. He greeted us enthusiastically at Rover Chalet and walked with us to Cope Hut. It was now quite hot and humid and we were glad to rest, and have a bite to eat. Michael had parked alongside the Bogong High Plains Road about 400 metres from Cope Hut. There was no shade but a constant breeze blew from the east.

The first competitors in the Bogong to Hotham Run passed by as we ate our lunch. They looked in a far worse state than we did! The runners at the front were still striking up a great head of steam, their noisy and strained panting testimony to their efforts. We let a few of them go past before setting foot on the track again. Michael walked with us for a little way along the Australian Alps Walking Track to a creek crossing at the head of Pretty Valley. Here we left him, and arranged that we would call him at about 5 o'clock, when we hoped to be at the top of Diamantina Spur on Mt Feathertop.

The flies were becoming more troublesome, and I cursed loudly each time one attempted to inspect the inside of my nos-



A rest stop on the Bogong High Plains. (After what she did to her feet—see photo on page 50—perhaps she's reluctant to get on to them!)

up the spur she did not need to say anything for me to see her discomfort.

The hot climb and incredible humidity began to take its toll on me, too. I felt drained and was suffering serious chafing in places I'd rather not mention. My energy of earlier in the afternoon had deserted me. We staggered on, pausing only for me to wipe sweat from my eyes or for Jodie to relax her aching knee.

At 5 o'clock we made our scheduled phone call to Michael. The reception was reasonable considering the heavy thunderstorm through which he had just driven. He told us that he would arrive at Harrierville within the next 40 minutes. I explained that we were having some trouble with heat and injury, and that we did not expect to arrive there until about 8 pm, two hours later than originally thought.

Walking under the increasingly overcast sky would have been quite pleasant had we not been sore and tired, but at least we were not far from the top of the spur. Thinning of the trees and easing of the grade indicated that we were nearing the junction of the Diamantina Spur and the Razorback. Lightning bolts flashed around us but the rain and squalls kept their

distance. Once on the Razorback the walking was relatively easy and the flat track gave us some respite. With Jodie's injury, all we could manage was a plod and it wasn't until ten minutes past six that we collapsed on to the grass outside Federation Hut.

The end of our journey seemed near—though there were still about nine kilometres to go—and it would be downhill all the way. Standing up again was difficult, and Jodie's first, tentative steps down the Bungalow Spur track were a sign that we were not going to enjoy a relaxing Sunday stroll to complete the walk. Bend followed bend and Harrierville didn't seem to get any closer. Several times I suggested that we stop for a rest, but a frustrated Jodie just wanted to keep moving and get the walk over with. I followed behind, ready to assist her if her knee gave up. At about 8 pm it was apparent that the sun was setting even though it was still hidden by the remnants of the afternoon's storm clouds, and I realised we weren't going to finish before dark.

'Stop.' Michael's voice startled me. 'I'll get a photo.' We stopped and waited for Michael to position himself a few metres down the track. Together Jodie and I passed him, but neither of us could even manage to attempt a smile. We were not far below Tobias Gap and were grateful that Michael had climbed so far from the base of the mountain to greet us.

The three of us walked down, but only one of us talked. Jodie and I mostly lis-

tened; to conserve energy was foremost on our minds. Slowly we descended, passing Picture Point and then a dried-up creek. Every passing of a major point on the track was significant to us; it helped us to remain sane by dividing up the track into small, manageable sections. Michael and I offered to assist Jodie but she declined. She is a tough woman, I thought, and she was going to reach Harrierville unassisted.

The track widens into an old fire track and I knew that we were close to the finish. Michael walked ahead to prepare some first aid while I consoled and encouraged Jodie. At 8.50 pm we touched down at the end of the track and fell into Michael's car in the dying light.

We immediately quelled our unquenchable thirst, put some food in our stomachs, and soothed our sore spots. And Michael, kind-hearted as he is, bought me a beer at the pub. Thanks, Mick.

The day ended almost as inconspicuously as it had begun. On the tortuous journey back to Falls Creek in Michael's car, Jodie promptly brought up her food while I ('I'm not really that tired!') fell asleep and only woke when my head, which had been thrashing from side to side as the car rounded the bends, thumped into the door.

Sleep came easily for both of us that night. ☺

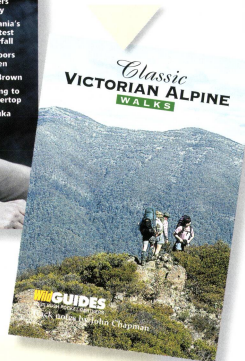
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WILD 199

Ski Gear Comes Full Circle

Michael Hampton ponders where we're heading

Until the middle of this century downhill (alpine) skiers got about on a combination of fat, wooden skis and leather boots, usually coupled with cable bindings. This form of 'free-heel' skiing was the norm well into the 1950s and 1960s and was the contemporary version of today's high-tech downhill skiing. The lack of ski-lifts meant that skiers had to walk up hills to earn their runs. Climbing skins or ropes were fitted to the ski soles or the skis were simply shouldered and steps kicked to the top. Also, many early ski destinations, particularly Mt Hotham, required strenuous 'cross-country' skiing to visit them during winter. Snowploughs, like ski-lifts, were still luxuries of the future.

For our pioneer skiers, the High Country was a deserted winter wonderland waiting to be explored. Although a few huts and primitive lodges were built, refuge was often found in cattlemen's or miners' huts. Sometimes these refuges were stocked with provisions before the winter snowfalls. The surrounding runs could then be skied from a base. These adventures and epics have been documented by enthusiasts such as Mick Hull, Elaine Mitchell and Harry Stephenson.

It was not until the 1960s and 1970s that touring on cross-country or Nordic skis became popular. This was partly a result of downhill skiers locking down their heels and preferring the new ski-tows and ski lodges to roughing it and walking for runs. Nordic skiing systems have traditionally been skinny, flimsy affairs designed for gliding on trails and prepared tracks. Downhill control, especially encumbered by an overnight pack, was not a feature. Nordic touring equipment has slowly evolved, however, and much has changed with the 'rediscovery' of the Telemark turn and the growing popularity of cross-country downhill (XCD) skiing.

Of course, the Telemark turn is not the only technique available to the free-heel skier. Don't forget that most downhill skills were originally developed using the old gear. Snowploughs, stem christies, parallels—the whole repertoire is available to the free-heeler who is prepared to put in the time on snow. Not surprisingly, it is the steep and deep that provide the greatest

challenge. Free-heeling the deep stuff especially requires a little more use of the body to get things happening (removing weight, steering and weight shift, for example). It is interesting that you can pick up some good tips by reading ski manuals and articles that were published in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s!

Today's tourers have a choice of sturdy, free-heel skiing set-ups which are very similar in function (if not in materials and flashy graphics) to the skis used by the pioneers. This, of course, brings us right back to where we started and some downhill skiers even claim that Telemarkers are 'reinventing downhill skiing'! That's not exactly true. We are simply adopting the benefits of advances in technology made over the last 50 years. For years free-heeler have been slapping three-pin bindings on to fat alpine skis. Now we have our very own fat Tele skis and plastic boots with snappy buckles. Also, the use of special release bindings is popular among those using heavier gear and racing gates. (I've always maintained that one attraction of free-heel skiing is not having to face the laborious task of putting skis back on after a big stack! [*You should know, Michael!* Editor])

So where are we now? We could be back in the late 1940s except that now we can choose between developed ski areas with modern accommodation or the adventure of first tracks in the back country beyond the lifts. We have Gore-Tex, fluoro, fluffy polar fleece and undies that dry while you wear them. We have plastic, Kevlar and high-tech ski design. The latest in lightweight camping gear and accessories can make overnight stays 'under canvas' a relative luxury. We profit from 50 years of advances in technical equipment—but on top of it all we've still got a free heel. And when your heel is free, so are your horizons! ☺

Michael Hampton (see Contributors in *Wild* no 17) lives in Marysville in Victoria's High Country and works during winter as a Nordic ski instructor. He is a former director of a ski school and has skied extensively in the Australian Alps and overseas.

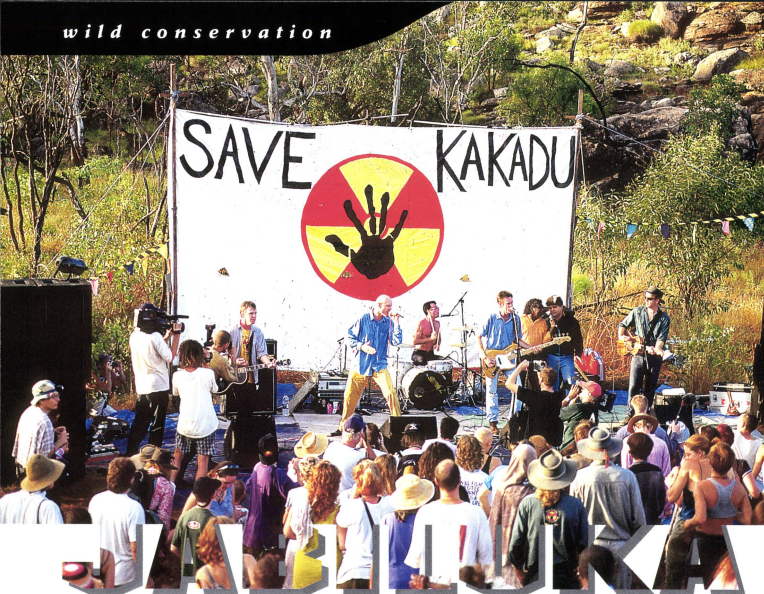
Drawing, the evolution of cross-country ski gear. Photo, Telemark tracks. Michael Hampton



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An overview of the issues, by Phoenix Arrien

Standing atop Ubirr rock-art site in Kakadu National Park, we watched the setting sun of magenta, yellow and pink slowly turn a vast, westerly flood-plain to gold. A thousand acres of shimmering gold stay in your mind for a long time. Maggie geese flew in for their evening drink, little jacanas strutted among the reeds with their chicks and black kites dipped and played on the air currents. Kangaroos bent to drink and dingoes prowled the water's edge. To the north and south stretched ridges of rock—Stone Country—to the east, green, forested hills. The overall impression was a vast, ancient, unique and wild land—not just a visual smorgasbord; a soothing drink for the soul.

But a strong current of controversy is running through the timeless landscape of Kakadu. Energy Resources Australia is building Jabiluka uranium mine in a large area 'excised' from, but completely surrounded by, the National Park. It is ten minutes' walk from indigenous communities and 500 metres from the Magela wetland system.

The Northern Territory and Federal Governments support the mine, citing jobs (110 for a maximum of 28 years) and a boost to the economy. Opposition to the project fo-

cus on cultural, environmental and nuclear concerns.

Environmental problems identified include the spread of radon gas from the exposed ore body and the dispersal of radioactive dust by tropical winds and rains. Radioactive tailings left behind after the ore is extracted remain active for 200 000 years and can cause lung cancer, leukaemia, birth defects and many other health problems.

Energy Resources Australia states that all its procedures are well within international standards of safety and environmental considerations. The Environmental Research Institute of the Supervising Scientist, Kakadu's government environmental monitoring body, agrees. However, its 1990-91 annual report admits that Ranger, the first uranium mine established by ERA in the Kakadu region (see photo opposite), has caused 'uranium, sulphate and magnesium contamination of surrounding waterways and wetlands'. The Australian Conservation Foundation kicks in with 96 documented leaks. The 1997 Environmental Impact Study, used as the environmental yardstick for approval for

Midnight Oil in concert at Jabiluka. All photos Ted Mead

the mine's construction, has been criticised by researchers from the Australian National University, environmental groups and others. But the office of Environment

Minister Senator Hill has 'complete confidence that the EIS is sufficient for the mine to go ahead'.

Thousands of concerned people responded to an invitation by the Mirrar people, the traditional landowners of the area, to join a blockade in Kakadu which started in March 1998. It takes a powerful commitment to camp in remote wilderness under Aboriginal rules in the heat and dust, to deal with police confrontations and live closely with many different people. In the eight months of the blockade, actions included entering the mine lease, 'locking on' to machinery, performances and creating a regular presence at the lease entrance. Non-violence was mandatory. It was especially testing when the police were rough or miners illegally drove their trucks into



camp—once they even raced around the camp, endangering lives.

The offset was being part of actions to protect a wilderness. It was also a rare chance to live on Aboriginal land in a World Heritage Area that has some of the world's most spectacular scenery—a night sky with a Milky Way thick enough to surf and a day sky filled with thousands of birds. The lifestyle included living with and respecting much of the wildlife—dingoes,

contingent from the World Heritage Bureau. On 21 June of that year the traditional owners had lodged a submission with the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, which maintains a register of all sites on the World Heritage Area List. They requested protection for the cultural values of Kakadu, one of less than 20 places listed for both natural and cultural values. The contingent reported to a conference in Kyoto, Japan, in December

eral in the ground; many 'dangerous' sacred sites are on or near uranium deposits. If disturbed, death and destruction are prophesied by the Aborigines who have lived on this land for centuries. It can be compared with how digging up Bethlehem would affect Christians; Mecca, the Muslims and the Western Wall, the Jews. If Jab-iluka goes ahead, Yvonne Margarula, Mirrar senior traditional landowner who is responsible for protecting the Mirrar country

(an awesome responsibility by anyone's standards), says that she will leave Kakadu for self-imposed exile.

The lives of the Aborigines are intertwined with the land in a way that white fellas find hard to grasp. Big Bill Neidge is the elder of the Bunitj clan which has land downstream from the Mirrar's and is therefore at great risk from radioactive waste floating down the waterways. His dark face is a map of deep lines with eyes that seem to see things beyond my reach. Through his words and presence I gained a privileged glimpse into 'living country'. I began to understand that *continuous* nurturing of the land over centuries by people



Above, the perfect place for a mine? (Jabiluka, overlooking the Ranger uranium mine site.) Right, what tourists come to see? (Ranger mine, Kakadu.)

scorpions, spiders, centipedes, wild horses, crocodiles, bees, wasps, mosquitoes, bull ants, flies and the deadliest snakes in the world.

Activism is addictive, practical and clear-cut. My two weeks' 'observation' turned into a four-months stay during which I participated in marches and demonstrations and helped with media liaison, front-gate watches and the constant operation of radios. The blockade seemed to have much in common with an Australian James Bond movie, featuring reconnaissance trips through thick bush in muggy heat and mass actions surrounded by police, helicopters and cameras!

The camp closed in October due to the onset of the wet season but the fight had spread to towns and cities all over the country. Passions are strong over Kakadu and Senator Bob Brown believes that the campaign will be bigger than the fight to save the Franklin River. More than 600 people have been arrested and Jabiluka Action Group meetings all over Australia are well attended. Rallies have been held in Germany, Japan and the UK.

The issue gained worldwide attention in October 1998 with the visit of a top-level




1998 that Kakadu is in danger from mining. After stating that this will not make a difference to the mine going ahead, the government has been criticised for boasting about Australia's World Heritage Areas while at the same time not taking the accompanying responsibilities seriously.

The Kakadu mine development is symbolic of the environmental choices facing us in the late twentieth century. It brings together the issues of the value of a clean and relatively safe environment, the direction of today's increasingly studied economic trends, and the rights of indigenous people to choose a future in harmony with their own cultural beliefs.

The traditional owners of the land, the Mirrar, are firmly opposed to the mine. Their opposition to it has been widely publicised. Their ancestors sensed the min-

sensitive to its peculiar rhythms has allowed Kakadu to have a power and life I have not experienced elsewhere.

The crocodile snaps, the jabiru struts, the eagle dives. A baby turtle breaks through its shell crying life; a wallaby blends softly into paintings made by long-dead hands on to solid rock. The mosaic of existence plays in and out without apology, and the intensity of life shimmers in brilliant colours. We feel our part—however small it is, in the awe-inspiring grandeur of nature—and know that if we rip up the land, we rip up our selves. 

Phoenix Arren once co-founded an outdoors adventure company which specialised in working with disadvantaged groups. Five years of long days took its toll, so when a client used his newfound skills to abscond through a skylight and burgle a house, it signalled that a change was needed. She presently travels, adventures and writes.

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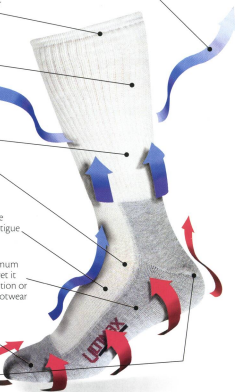
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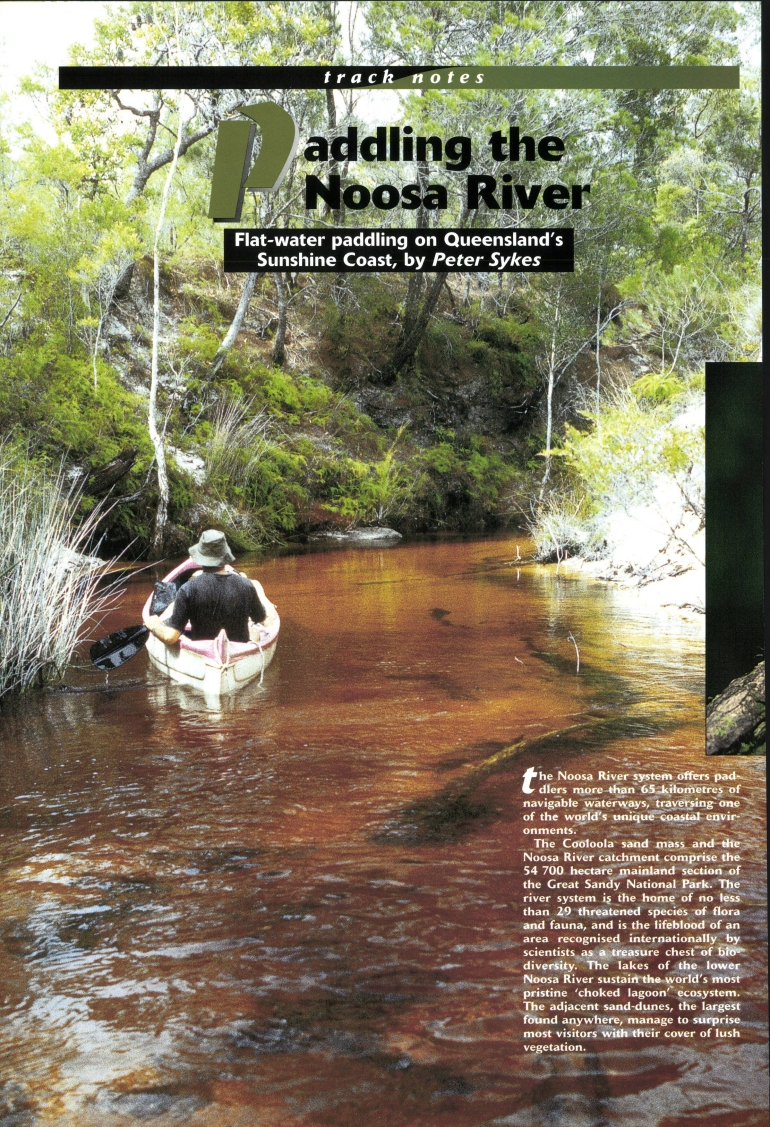


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Paddling the Noosa River

Flat-water paddling on Queensland's Sunshine Coast, by *Peter Sykes*

A photograph showing a person from behind, wearing a hat and a dark shirt, paddling a small white boat with pink trim down a river. The water is a deep reddish-brown color. The river is surrounded by dense, lush green forest with many trees and bushes. The scene is peaceful and scenic.

The Noosa River system offers paddlers more than 65 kilometres of navigable waterways, traversing one of the world's unique coastal environments.

The Cooloola sand mass and the Noosa River catchment comprise the 54 700 hectare mainland section of the Great Sandy National Park. The river system is the home of no less than 29 threatened species of flora and fauna, and is the lifeblood of an area recognised internationally by scientists as a treasure chest of biodiversity. The lakes of the lower Noosa River sustain the world's most pristine 'choked lagoon' ecosystem. The adjacent sand-dunes, the largest found anywhere, manage to surprise most visitors with their cover of lush vegetation.

The trip described here can be completed in two days but there is easily enough walking and paddling for visitors to fill in a very active week. Teewah Creek is narrow and relatively fast-flowing with steep banks. About 30 per cent of the paddle down the creek is spent jumping out of the canoe to haul it over log obstructions—exhausting, but by no means difficult.

Teewah Creek contrasts beautifully with the serenity of the Noosa River. To top things off, Lake Cootharaba helps to highlight why the World Conservation Union has dubbed the system a 'notable feature'. If common sense prevails, Cooloola's World Heritage listing could be just around the corner.

● When to go

South-east Queensland has a relatively short winter which cold-climate residents generally find quite tolerable. Spring is per-

fect—Cooloola is world famous for its spectacular wild-flower displays—and not too cold for spoilt banana-benders.

● Maps

The recently revised black-and-white *Cooloola Coast 1:80 000 'Gittoes'* map can be purchased throughout the region and is specifically designed for outdoors adventuring. It is vastly superior to the topographical map available. The widely distributed *Cooloola Region 1:100 000* tourist map would suffice but is short on detail.

● Further reading

The Queensland National Parks & Wildlife Service publishes extremely useful visitor information sheets. The *Waterways self-guide* outlines some of the trickier navigational manoeuvres and the recently updated visitor information sheet is a good general

National Park. Both maps mentioned show Coops Corner—not signposted—on this road. The turn-off can be easily identified by the overhead power lines that run to the Teewah Creek pumping station. Cooloola Way can only be traversed by two-wheel-drive vehicles in fair weather. Counter Road is a good but uninteresting alternative.

● Camping

Camping on the upper Noosa River is restricted to official camp-sites which are in high demand in holiday periods, so book early. Camping is prohibited on some sections near the Teewah Creek pumping station but suitable bush-camping spots are plentiful. Both Harrys Hut and Fig Tree Point are high-capacity camping grounds.

● The trip

You will paddle from Teewah Creek by way of Noosa River to Elanda Point on Lake Cootharaba. The 33 kilometre trip takes two to three days.

Launch your canoe at the Teewah Creek pumping station. You will need almost an hour of daylight if you choose to paddle down to a suitable and attractive camp-site immediately. There are plenty of good spots away from 'no camping' zones at the old log bridge and slightly further downstream. You can easily avoid hassles by letting the rangers know your plans.

The old log bridge, a forestry legacy, has now completely collapsed into the creek. The former logging track heading east is inaccessible to vehicles and contains the most colourful and varied wallum



Left, Teewah diddy diddy, dum dum Teewah! (Don't rock the boat!) Peter Sykes. Above, azure kingfishers frequent the area. Ken Chapman

fect—Cooloola is world famous for its spectacular wild-flower displays—and not too cold for spoilt banana-benders.

● Warnings

The south-east Queensland sun can be brutal if you are unprepared. Sunburn is best avoided by covering up. Remember, when on Teewah Creek you will be constantly jumping in and out of the water and even the most water-resistant sunscreen will be ineffective as well as being a pollutant. Wear an old pair of joggers and don't be afraid to get your clothes wet.

Sturdy plastic canoes cope well with Teewah's log obstructions—of which there will

guide. Unfortunately, neither is designed to help with the downstream paddle described here, so a little reverse logic is required if you want to use them. QNPWS offices are at both ends of the paddle and there is an isolated lakeside information centre in between.

● Access

A car shuttle is required. Driving north from Brisbane on the Bruce Highway, take the signposted turn-off to the township of Pomona. Use a map to follow the maze of roughly signposted country roads to Elanda Point on Lake Cootharaba. Elanda Point has a private camping ground, canoe hire, transport and a QNPWS facility for launching canoes. Leave a vehicle here and familiarise yourself with the landing zone so that you can recognise it on your return.

The starting point of your paddling trip is off Cooloola Way, which runs through the

the trip at a glance

GRADE Moderate

LENGTH Two to three days

TYPE Tall sand dunes, various forest types and estuarine waterways

REGION South-east Queensland

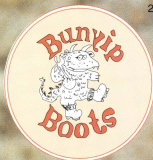
BEST TIME Spring or autumn

SPECIAL POINTS River camp-sites in high demand during holiday periods. Group sizes limited by site, and camp-fires not permitted

wild-flower displays found in the park. A short walk in the late afternoon or early morning is a springtime essential.

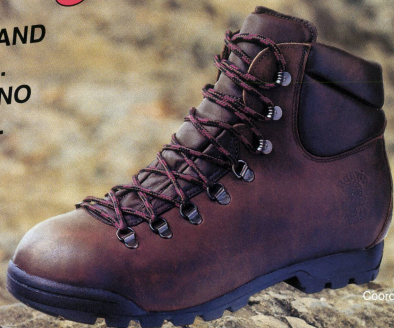
While camping, watch for any of the four species of rare 'acid frogs', platypuses or the Chelid turtle found in the area—all are expected to be 'negatively affected by water extraction' according to a recent environmental-impact assessment. Only a small number of highly specialised aquatic species can withstand the high acidity and low levels of chemical nutrients of the pure, sand-filtered water in the creek.

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Day one

If you paddled the short distance to the old log bridge, you will have already experienced some of the attractions the creek has to offer. The intimacy of moving from the territory of one azure kingfisher into another is an absolute delight as you make your way down the five kilometre Teewah Creek leg of the paddle. Bear in mind that you are looking at a place that was nearly turned into an exotic pine plantation similar to those you saw on the drive in.

Even though you will be fairly busy facing the challenges of the creek, observe the dramatic changes as you move from one band of vegetation to another. Depending on water levels, there is usually only one place where you have to portage the canoe in order to negotiate an obstruction.

Melaleucas (tea-trees) are responsible for the creek's tea-coloured water. When you begin to notice more deep, dark pools and banks of tiny, reddish-green pygmy sundew the Noosa River won't be too far off. A short paddle down Joes Gully is worth while if you have the time—otherwise, stay on the main creek until you reach the river. All up, it takes about half a day to reach the junction of the Noosa River and Teewah Creek.

The broad expanse and serenity of the meandering Noosa River is usually a welcome sight to exhausted canoe carters. The first of the official camp-sites is at the junction, but my favourite (because it is the only place where I've ever seen an endangered false water-rat) is bush camping site number eight—about an hour's paddle downstream. In between all the honey-suckle banksias you will notice a gully, unnamed on the map, on your left soon after the junction. A short side-trip will take you into an open swamp—the type of place where endangered ground parrots live—and yet another unique ecosystem.

Day two

The distance from bush camping site number eight to Elanda Point on Lake Cootharaba is about 24 kilometres—a fairly full day by any standards. On the way to Harrys Hut (about 13 kilometres) you will probably be escorted by the usual array of feathered creatures. 'Ducks' of some description usually turn out to be rare chestnut teal. The impressively modulated call of Brahminy kites is often heard and the black cormorant's wing-drying ceremony rivals any artistic dance performance. For sheer sci-fi exuberance, the spine-tailed swift does a good impression of the light-speed manoeuvrability of Luke Skywalker's X-wing fighter.

Bush camping site number three has toilet facilities and there is a worthwhile 12 kilometre return walk to the Cooloola Sandpatch—a magnificent sand blow with great views of the surrounding countryside. Harrys Hut is a developed camping ground accessible by road, and tank-water is available. Once past camp-site three, motorised boating is permitted; tour boats become commonplace by the time you reach Harrys Hut. Harry Spring, a certified eco-hero, sold the surrounding 100 hectares of rainforest to

the QNPWS for the staggering sum of one dollar.

After a short paddle beyond Harrys Hut you enter the Narrows—a tranquil, mirror-like section of the river. From the end of the Narrows four relatively tricky navigational manoeuvres come up. Where the river divides, turn right and take note of the signposts. If you intend to spend the night at Fig Tree Point you have time to paddle north and explore Lake Como. Otherwise continue downstream through the unique riverbank vegetation (sedge) until you see a narrow channel on your right that is easily missed and takes you to the picnic/camping area (tank-water available), noted for its extremely well fed and somewhat insistent giant goannas. It is about five-and-a-half kilo-

A marker indicates the mouth of Kin Kin Creek. Paddle through the mangroves for a short distance and turn into a channel on your left. An obscured signpost is on the northern bank at this junction. A short paddle brings you out at the QNPWS Kinaba information centre (one-and-a-half kilometres from Fig Tree Point)—accessible only by boat or walking tracks. A 500 metre mangrove self-guiding boardwalk at the centre is well worth exploring.

'The river system is the home of no less than 29 threatened species of flora and fauna.'

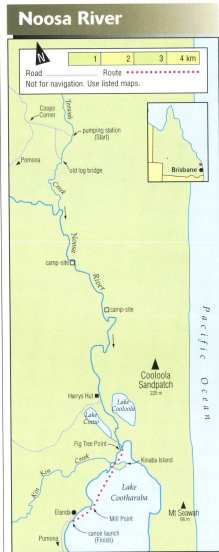
Head winds can make the four kilometre paddle across the north-western end of Lake Cootharaba something of a challenge. However, the lake is relatively shallow and you can guide the canoe on foot for a considerable distance if the going gets really tough. To the south-west is Mill Point—the site of a famous forestry boiler explosion in the late nineteenth century in which several men were killed. The rusty old boiler still stands near the remains of ageing jetty stumps—a final, intriguing, historical relic to top off one of Australia's classic scenic paddles.

From Mill Point follow the western shore past the commercial camping site to the QNPWS canoe launching area. Collect your vehicle from here. If returning to the Teewah Creek pumping station to pick up a vehicle, keep in mind that the Rainbow Beach Road is only a short drive north of Coops Corner and is the beginning of a sealed road network that will get you back to the Bruce Highway at Gympie.

Alternative paddles

Multiday return paddling trips which do not require a car shuttle can be made from Elanda Point, nearby Boreen Point, or Harrys Hut. These popular options include plenty of the Noosa River system and allow time for a lot of good bushwalking. Official QNPWS literature is geared to these trips. However, since first experiencing the Teewah Creek trip I have never taken this easier organisational option. ☺

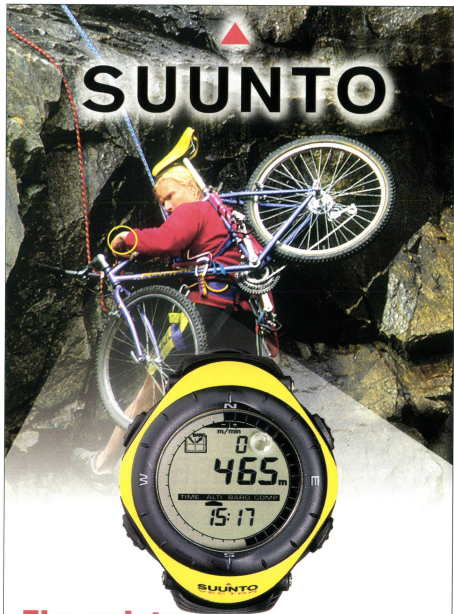
Peter Sykes is president of the Wide Bay-Burnett Parks Committee and coordinator of the Queensland Environmental Consumers Organisation. He is a key figure in the campaign to have Cooloola National Park included in the World Heritage List.



metres from Harrys Hut to Fig Tree Point direct.

At Fig Tree Point is the intriguing Melaleuca Circuit—a boardwalk through a tea-tree swamp. This northern section of Lake Cootharaba also has the 'Everglades' and your first sweeping views of the area from which you have come. Kinaba Island juts out directly to the south and you are looking for a channel marker to the south-west that is not yet visible to the naked eye. Watch the traffic and you will quickly get the picture.

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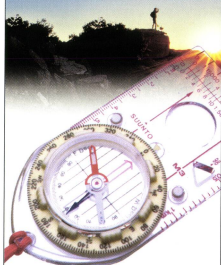


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track notes—easier walking

The Brisbane Ranges

Real bushwalking near Melbourne, by *Stephen Down*



From a distance the Brisbane Ranges are almost obscured by the haze of the Werribee plains and the You Yangs; they seem to be a low range of forested hills and can only be appreciated on closer inspection. As you draw nearer, the heavily eroded eastern escarpment becomes visible. This sudden rise was caused by a geological break, known as the Rowsley Fault.

An even closer look will show that the real, hidden delights are the abundant flora and fauna. The park has more than 600 plant species. It is unusual to walk through it without seeing kangaroos, koalas or wedge-tailed eagles.

There is also evidence of past gold-mining, slate- and gravel mining and water catchment developments. Using the roads and tracks, an overnight bushwalk has something for everyone.

● When to go

The Brisbane Ranges can be visited at any time of the year. Most popular is spring, when the wild flowers are at their best. In summer the heat and lack of water may deter some people.

the walk at a glance

GRADE Moderate

LENGTH Two days

TYPE Dry open forest, gorges, wildlife, wild flowers and history

REGION Southern Victoria

BEST TIME September–November

SPECIAL POINTS Off-track walking prohibited because of cinnamon fungus

● Safety/warnings

Apart from getting lost or injured, the danger in the park is not to humans but to the park itself. A disease called cinnamon fungus can be spread from one plant to another by bushwalkers carrying dirt on their boots. The fungus attacks a plant by killing the fine roots. The plant may then die because its ability to absorb water is reduced.

Grass-trees, bush peas and banksias with the disease turn brown, and there is no easy cure. Bushwalkers must keep to the tracks to stop its spread. Wash your boots thoroughly after the walk as an extra precaution, especially if you are travelling to another bushwalking destination directly afterwards.

It is advisable to boil the water from the water-tank at Little River camp-site. Check the availability of water with the ranger beforehand.

Mine shafts and crumbling, old quarries are dotted around the park; avoid them by keeping to the track.

After heavy rains the Little River traverse should be carefully negotiated.

● Maps

Several maps are required for the walk. The latest park notes contain the most up-to-date information on track position. The *Staughton Vale* 1:25 000 Vicmap sheet covers most of the walk. The *Eclipse Creek* 1:25 000 Vicmap sheet covers a small section near Anakie Gorge. The *Brisbane Ranges National Park* 1:50 000 map, produced by SR & PN Brookes, covers the whole park and most tracks.

Relaxed walking beside the Little River.
Stephen Down

● Further reading

Phone Parks Victoria in Anakie on (03) 5284 1230 for the latest track notes. Tyrone Thomas's *120 Walks in Victoria* contains a couple of walks in this region.

● Access

A car shuttle is required between Boar Gully camping area and Anakie Gorge picnic area. Thompsons Road can be used as the car shuttle route.

From Melbourne, take the Western Highway to Bacchus Marsh. Turn off and head south on the Bacchus Marsh–Baliang road. Boar Gully camping area can be reached by turning right at Reids Road. For Anakie Gorge, continue on the Bacchus Marsh–Baliang road that turns west and heads towards the ranges. The road then turns south on to the Staughton Vale road. The turn-off to Anakie Gorge is shortly after Staughton Vale.

● Camping

The park has two bushwalking campsites and only one car camping site (Boar Gully). To camp at any of these, permits must be obtained from the ranger at the Parks Victoria office; telephone (03) 5284 1230. No other camping is allowed in the park. A maximum of 12 people can camp at Little River camping area. Toilets and water are available at each camping area. It costs \$8.30 for six people to camp at Boar Gully. The bushwalking camp-sites are free of charge, at least for now.

● The walk

The walk starts at the northern end of the park at Boar Gully and generally heads south. The route descends and then ascends the Rowsley Fault. The walk then passes through several river valleys before reaching Stony Creek. The track heads east above Anakie Gorge and finishes at the end of the gorge. It can be completed in either direction; my preference is to start at Boar Gully. The walk described is from north to south, and part of it is along a three-day route through the park, with orange markers on small pine posts.

● Day one

A signpost to Little River at the southern end of Boar Gully camping area shows the start of the walk. The track initially follows the park boundary. Turn left at the Open Track. The walk now crosses the dry backbone of the range through stunted forests of fascinating grass-trees, and descends the Rowsley Fault, using the Open, Oblique, Aeroplane and Spike Tracks.

The descent of the Spike Track should provide good views over the Werribee plains towards Melbourne if the weather is favourable.

Turn right at the junction with the Brisbane Track, which follows the boundary of the park. On the right the forested slopes rise above you while on the left the farmland of the plains extends almost as far as you can see. Continue until you reach the Quarry Track. Follow



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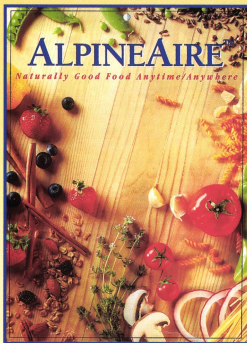
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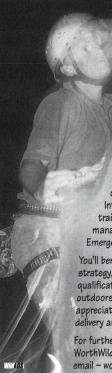


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this back to the range. It passes through an old, disused quarry which is largely overgrown. A small slate quarry is easily viewed near the top of the spur.

Turn left on to the Slater Track. The route now follows a marked track to Little River camping area. Before you reach Thompsons Road, you descend a small, steep valley where the rough road becomes a walking track. While you are walking down this attractive, little gorge it is hard to believe that you are only 80 kilometres from a big city, and one as big as Melbourne at that!

The route now follows roads again to Little River camping area. A picnic ground is on the road-side of the river. Cross the river before the waterhole, and find a small camping area. Keep your eyes up and open while dusk descends and you might see one or two koalas in the surrounding manna-gums. You will most likely hear koalas—as well as the rest of the bush orchestra.

● Day two

The track follows the picturesque Little River as it switchbacks through a small, rugged gorge. To assist navigation, the track is almost continuously marked by a trail of

stones. Some care is required to follow the track when it crosses the mostly dry river a number of times. It then leaves the river and climbs up out of the gorge. You will pass some very large grass-trees near the top of the ridge.

The track joins a rough road near Griffens Hill. Turn left here and follow the road, which passes round the hill and crosses another small creek. Before you reach McLeans Highway turn right at a gate; this will bring you out on to McLeans Highway opposite Switch Road. Continue along the latter until you reach the Kurung walking track turn-off. The track again heads steeply down into the Stony Creek valley. It crosses the creek just above the Stony Creek picnic area—a good spot for lunch. Water and toilets are available.

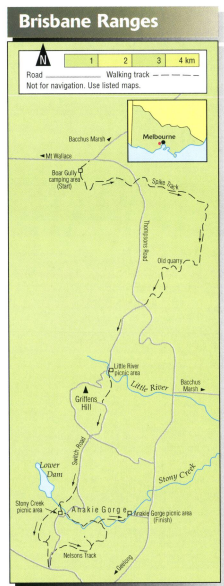
A shorter option to Anakie Gorge is to follow the Anakie Gorge track. However, the preferred route to the finishing-point is to follow the Outlook Track back up the southern slopes of the valley. Walkers must climb a ridge before the track descends and crosses a reed-clogged creek. Some unusually positioned duckboards are used to cross the creek. This is certainly not the path to follow at night!

The track then climbs again and sidles across to meet the track to the first lookout. Turn left and within 50 metres you reach a small, rocky platform with excellent views of the Brisbane Ranges as well as distant views of Mt Wallace and the Macedon ranges to the north.

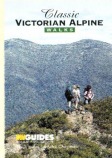
Retrace your steps and pass the track you just climbed. Shortly after you will be at a junction; turn left here and follow this track until it meets the Redbeak Track. Turn left again to reach Switch Road once more. Turn left and follow this road until you reach Nelsons Track. Follow this track to the Nelsons Lookout track. Leave your packs and take the short walk to the lookout to enjoy good views of the Lower Dam and surrounding ranges. Collect your rucksacks and continue along the rough track, which follows a fence-line. You will walk through a small gully choked with grass-trees. At a corner of the fence-line the track follows a spur down into Anakie Gorge. Before it descends there is another lookout with excellent views of the Werrbee plains and even Port Phillip Bay through the end of the gorge.

The track descends steeply into the gorge. By now your knees will be glad that this is the last descent of the trip. You will reach the Anakie Gorge track, which is of a high standard. It follows an old water pipeline and brings you into the Anakie Gorge picnic area and to the end of the walk. ●

Stephen Down first contributed to *Wild* in issue 49. He has been a keen bushwalker since the age of twelve. When he moved to Melbourne from Tasmania he became an even keener XCD skier. Stephen has walked and skied throughout southern-eastern Australia, Europe and Canada and has trekked in Nepal.



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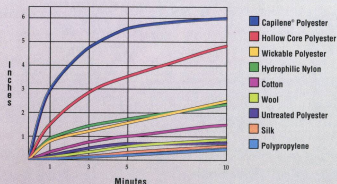
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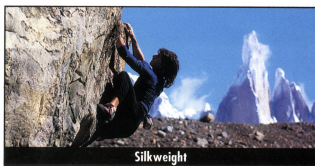
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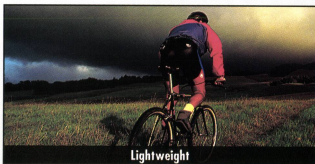
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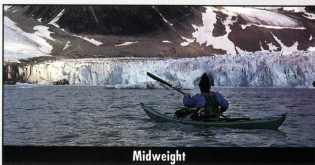
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Water purifiers and filters

Michael Hampton drinks to them

Water, the elixir of life. We can't live without it, and many creatures live in it. It can, however, contain hazards such as microscopic protozoa, bacteria and viruses. These can be removed or rendered harmless by filtration, boiling and/or chemical treatment (iodine/chlorine). Most of these 'gubbies' can survive in cold water for months. *Giardia lamblia* is the most notorious protozoan. We be-

This survey summarises the findings of the writer, who was selected for the task because of his knowledge of the subject and his impartiality, among other things. The survey was checked and verified by *Glenn Tempest*, and reviewed by at least three of *Wild's* editorial staff. It is based on the items' availability and specifications at the time of this issue's production; however, ranges and specifications may have changed since then.

Some aspects of this survey, such as the assessment of value and features—and especially the inclusion/exclusion of certain products—entail a degree of subjective judgment on the part of the author, the referee and *Wild*, space being a key consideration.

An important criterion for inclusion in a *Wild* survey is 'wide availability'. To qualify, a product must usually be stocked by a number of specialist outdoors shops in the central business districts of major Australian capital- and other cities.

Despite these efforts to achieve accuracy, impartiality, comprehensiveness and usefulness, no survey is perfect. Apart from the obvious human elements that may affect assessment, the quality, materials and specifications of any product may vary markedly from batch to batch and even from sample to sample. It is ultimately the responsibility of readers to determine what is best for their particular circumstances and for the use they have in mind for gear reviewed.

You never know what's in the water! David Noble



come infested with giardia by drinking water contaminated by the faeces of an infected animal or person. Giardia protozoa are relatively large and easier to filter. Cryptosporidium parvum is a thick-skinned 'wild card', and especially dangerous as traditional chemical treatments (iodine/chlorine) are ineffective. The only options

Boiling and chemical disinfection

The traditional method of making drinking-water safe is boiling. However, this only kills nasties; you still drink any sediments, chemicals, and the dead bodies of any microscopic 'gooberies' present. Boiling also has its practical limitations: how much time and fuel do you have for 'boiling the billy'?

Travellers and walkers have relied on iodine for years. Again, chemical treatments only kill micro-organisms and also have some practical limitations. Depending on dosage level, iodine needs at least ten minutes—or longer if the water is cold—to dispatch micro-organisms, and it leaves a taste in the water. Dosing your drinking-water with (potentially dangerous) chemicals is only recommended for short-term use; say, six weeks at the maximum. Iodine tablets are inexpensive. Puritabs cost \$9.95; Micropur, \$16.95. Coghlan's Drinking Water Treatment, at \$18.95, has a second tablet to neutralise the iodine.

are removal by filtration, or death by boiling. Entamoeba histolytica causes amoebic dysentery and is prevalent in developing countries. Bacteria are smaller again, requiring finer filtration. Bacteria include the infamous Escherichia coli and salmonella (typhoid). Viruses are incredibly small. A filter capable of removing viruses such as Hepatitis A and B, meningitis and the polio virus would need to have pores smaller than a minuscule 0.020 microns. Viruses are more likely than bacteria to be found in water but food can pose significant risks. Fortunately, bacteria and viruses can also be killed by boiling or iodine/chlorine treatment. Dealing with them in food is another matter!

At the core of the units surveyed is a thick, dense strainer or depth filter. A hand pump draws the water up the inlet hose and forces it through the filter. The finer the strainer the quicker it clogs. Therefore, micro-filters with an absolute pore size capable of trapping tiny viruses are impractical as portable rucksack accessories (*absolute* means that nothing larger than the quoted size gets through). Generally, manufacturers rely on chemical treatments to eliminate the smaller bacteria and viruses, thus 'purifying' the water. A major point of contention is overall effectiveness or 'safety', as opposed to field performance. This survey is not a laboratory test. We set out to assess the units for the rucksack enthusiast. However, it should be noted that all units included

points to watch

- Buying a filter is like buying a tent. Don't buy a filter suitable for one person if you're going away with the whole family.
- Consider what water-carrying systems you already own and/or will purchase. How compatible will they be with the unit you have in mind and its intended uses?
- Field maintenance; cartridge capacity; and spare filters and other parts are important considerations for trekkers and walkers who intend to embark on remote, longer adventures.

pass Environment Protection Authority (USA) standards.

Not included in the table are two units by General Ecology: the Microlite and the First Need Deluxe. These are not widely available in Australia. Also not included is the Safe Water portable water filtration system. This product has just become available in Australia (see Equipment, page 89).

Unit

Microfilters with a filter pore size of 0.2 to 1.0 microns remove sediments, 'floaties', giardia and most bacteria. Purifiers with a filter pore size of 0.004 microns and the assistance of chemicals can eliminate everything including giardia, bacteria and viruses; the chemical components may also retard



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Water purifiers and filters

Survey

		Unit: pore size, microns	Filter	Weight, grams	Capacity, litres	Replacement cost, \$	Durability	Portability	Performance	Maintenance	Suitability for	Trekking	Casual bushwalking	Frequent bushwalking	Comments	Agency price, \$
Katadyn Switzerland www.katadyn.ch																
	Combi #	M, 0.2	Silver-impregnated ceramic and activated carbon granules	725	50 000	146	★★★★	★★★	★★	★★★	● 1/2	★★★	★★	★★	Bottle adaptor included. Refillable and removable carbon filter – 200 litres a fill	295
	◀ Pocket Filter	M, 0.2	Silver-impregnated ceramic	585	50 000	290	★★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★	★★★	★★	★★★	20-year warranty. Cartridge can be cleaned up to 300 times	440
MSR USA www.msrcorp.com																
	◀ MiniWorks	M, 0.3	Ceramic with carbon core	456	400	70	★★★	★★★	na	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	Cartridge can be cleaned up to 40 times	130
	WaterWorks II*	M, 0.3	Ceramic with carbon and PES membrane	540	400	70	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	Can be used with or without PES membrane filter	290
PUR USA www.purwater.com																
	Hiker	M, 0.3	Fibre, pleated with carbon core	312	800	59	★★★	★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	Voyageur cartridge upgrades unit to purifier. One-year warranty on antidig cartridge. Bottle adaptor included	130
	Voyageur	P, 0.3	Fibre, pleated with iodised resin core	312	400	79	★★★	★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	★★★★	Stop-top carbon filter included. One-year warranty on antidig cartridge	160
	◀ Explorer #	P, 0.3	Fibre, with iodised resin core	567	400	99	★★★	★★	★★★★	★★	● 1/2	★★★★	★★	★★★★	No disassembly required to clean unit. Stop-top carbon filter included	270
SweetWater USA www.cascadedesigns.com																
	WalkAbout †	M, 0.2	Glass fibre matrix with carbon layer	260	570	49	★★	★★★★	na	na	★★★★	● 1/2	★★	● 1/2	Has a filter replacement indicator	100
	◀ Guardian †	M, 0.2	As above	320	910	80	★★★	★★	★★★★	★★	★★★★	★★	★★	★★★★	Optional ViralGuard cartridge (\$60) upgrades unit to purifier. Optional micron-grade prefilter. Has a filter replacement indicator	130

● poor ●● average ●●● good ●●●● excellent Unit: Microfilter, Purifier Pore size applies to the filter. The ratings were supplied by the manufacturers # These units are suitable for larger groups of users and are rated accordingly na not assessed in the field * This unit has a micron rating of 0.2 with the PES membrane PUR The Stop-top carbon filter is claimed to reduce unpleasant tastes and odours † not seen by referee The country listed after the manufacturer/brand is the country in which the products are made

● poor ●● average ●●● good ●●●● excellent Unit: Microfilter, Purifier Pore size applies to the filter. The ratings were supplied by the manufacturers # These units are suitable for large groups of users and are rated accordingly * na not assessed in the field * This unit has a micron rating of 0.2 with the PES membrane PUR The Stop-top carbon filter is claimed to reduce unpleasant tastes and odours † not seen by referee The country listed after the manufacturer/brand is the country in which the products are made

filter infestation. (These convenient definitions have been adopted from PUR.)

Filter

Activated carbon eliminates unpleasant tastes, odours and some chemicals such as iodine. It's important that carbon filtration doesn't follow immediately after iodine treatment as the chemical needs time—at least ten minutes depending on water temperature and dosage—to kill bugs. Katadyn uses a ceramic cartridge impregnated with silver which protects the units against microbiological penetration and contamination. It is claimed that the ceramic element of the Pocket Filter can be cleaned up to 300 times! MSR units use a combination of ceramic and carbon which, like the Katadyn units, can be cleaned with a brush or scourer. One MSR model has an additional PES membrane. SweetWater and PUR use a combination of glass fibre with carbon. The SweetWater cartridge can be scrubbed, but the PUR pleated filter, which has a greater surface area allowing for improved flow and less likelihood of clogging, will only tolerate rinsing. However, PUR guarantees its cartridges against clogging for one year. To provide purifier protection PUR

employs a cartridge containing an iodised resin compound, whereas SweetWater offers an optional penta-iodine cartridge that fits to the base of its primary unit, the Guardian. Manufacturers recommend passing extremely cold or badly contaminated water through purifiers twice, with two hours between pumpings and a 20-minute wait after the second pumping.

Cartridge

'Capacity' refers to how much water you can expect to pump through a cartridge before it becomes ineffective. This will vary according to the turbidity of water sources.

Durability

The most durable units are also the heaviest.

User friendliness

We field tested as many units as we could to assess user friendliness, where it counts, 'out there'.

'Portability' reflects how easily a unit assembles/disassembles and fits into a pack. Does the unit leak, with the danger of cross-contamination, and is the storage bag adequate?

In the back country performance is especially appreciated. Is it easy to operate the filter and is the rate of flow smooth and constant? Is the output worth the effort? Does the unit tolerate turbid (cloudy, silty) water?

Is it quick and easy to clean the filter and carry out routine maintenance?

Suitability for use

The 'Suitability for' columns cover the range of rucksack activities. 'Casual travel': having a unit as a stand-by, pumping the odd litre. 'Trekking': sustained daily use in developing countries. Weekend day walks and the occasional overnighter qualify as 'Casual bushwalking' whereas regular multiday walks or ski tours are considered to be 'Frequent bushwalking'.

Comments

Special features, additions and optional extras are noted under the 'Comments' column of the survey. ●

Michael Hampton (see Contributors in Wild no 17) lives in Marysville in Victoria's High Country and works during winter as a Nordic ski instructor. He is a former director of a ski school and has skied extensively in the Australian Alps and overseas.

Make your best approach in Five Ten!

The Extreme has run the Inca Trail and climbed 5,111, but most people choose it for everyday adventures.

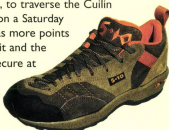
It has the comfort of a running shoe, but the convex midsole and treaded Stealth® SI sole makes an unbeatable approach shoe. The '98 Extreme features a new, extra-durable 420 denier nylon Ripstop upper.

Brown/black, U.S. sizes 4-13, Stealth® SI rubber soles, polyurethane midsole, convex sole profile, technical toe rand, durable full-grain leather / 420 denier nylon Ripstop upper.



The Mountain Master is the ultimate cross-playing shoe. The shoe you'd wear to hike to the base of Kanchenjunga, to run from the Valley to Tuolumne, to traverse the Cuillin Ridge or man the barbecue on a Saturday night. The S-Curve lacing has more points of adjustment for a custom fit and the treaded Stealth® soles are secure at any angle.

Grey/Rust, sizes US 5-13, Stealth® soles, polyurethane midsole, technical toe rand, all leather upper, S-Curve lacing.



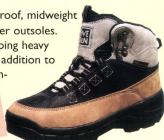
The Polar Spire is the best value in midweight hiking boots on the market. Look for yourself: Stealth® rubber outsoles, Stormbrella™ waterproof, vapour-permeable membrane lining, reinforced leather uppers, high-density polymer midsole, heel to toe cushioning for comfort, and stunningly affordable!

Black/Slate/Sand, U.S. sizes 5-13, Stormbrella™ waterproof, vapour-permeable membrane, Stealth® SI outsole, injection moulded high-density polymer midsole, thermal insulated full-length cushioning, waterproof split-leather upper.



The new Polar Sun is a waterproof, midweight hiking boot with Stealth® rubber outsoles. It's the perfect choice for humping heavy loads on precarious terrain. In addition to the sticky lug outsoles, the high-density polymer midsole and insulated cushioning provide daylong support and comfort over the toughest tracks.

Charcoal/Ash/Brown, sizes US 5-13, Stealth® Lug outsole, full-grain all leather upper, gusseted tongue, technical toe rand, Stormbrella™ waterproof, vapour-permeable membrane, injection-moulded, high-density polymer midsole, thermal-insulated full-length cushioning.



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- Cold weather safe valve.
- Optional Stuff Sacks, Chair Kits and Repair Kits are available.
- Lite models with cored foam available.
- Models with built pillows also available.
- US patented and others patent pending.



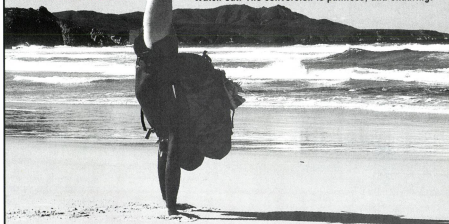
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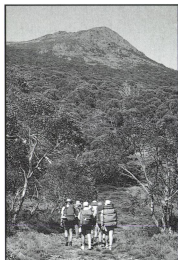
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One-person shelters

Andrew Lindblade crawls in for a closer look

If you are serious about going lightweight on your wilderness trips, bivvy-bags and one-person tents are particularly useful short-term shelters.

If there's one thing that hinders a good trip, it's an overweight pack. People often confuse 'lightweight'

This survey summarises the findings of the writer, who was selected for the task because of his knowledge of the subject and his impartiality, among other things. The survey was checked and verified by *Brendon Eishold*, and reviewed by at least three of *Wild's* editorial staff. It is based on the items' availability and specifications at the time of this issue's production; ranges and specifications may have changed since then.

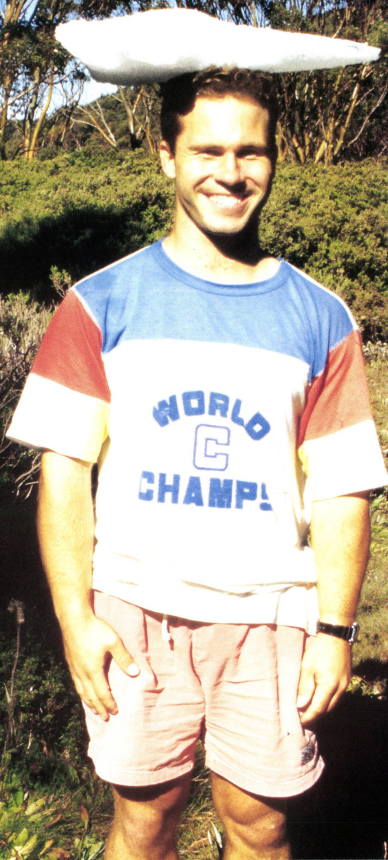
Some aspects of this survey, such as the assessment of value and features—and especially the inclusion/exclusion of certain products—entail a degree of subjective judgment on the part of the author; the referee and *Wild*, space being a key consideration.

'Value' is based primarily upon price relative to features and quality. A product with more elaborate or specialised features may be rated more highly by someone whose main concern is not price.

An important criterion for inclusion in this *Wild* survey is 'wide availability'. To qualify, a product must usually be stocked by a number of specialist outdoors shops in the central business districts of major Australian capital- and other cities.

Despite these efforts to achieve accuracy, impartiality, comprehensiveness and usefulness, no survey is perfect. Apart from the obvious human elements that may affect assessment, the quality, materials and specifications of any product may vary markedly from batch to batch and even from sample to sample. It is ultimately the responsibility of survey readers to determine what is best for their particular circumstances and for the use they have in mind for gear reviewed.

One-person shelters don't come any simpler. *Stephen Curtain*



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One-person shelters

Bivvy-bags

		Weight, grams	Dimensions: length x shoulder x foot, millimeters	Top material	Under material	Insect screen	Peg loops	Tie loops	Entrance closure	Foot shape	Roominess	Ventilation	Range of use	Value for money	Approx. price, \$
Bibler USA															
	Hoopd bivvy #	760	2280 x 880 x 400	Toddrex	Nylon	Yes	No	No	Zip, poles	Box	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	400
	Tripod bivvy fl	1150	2200 x 990 x 400	Toddrex	Nylon	Yes	Yes	No	Zip, poles	Hoopd	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	600
Macpac New Zealand															
	Alpine Cocoon	600	2300 x 700 x 600	Reflex	Polyester	Yes	Yes	No	Zip	Mummy	●●●	●●●	●●●●	●●●●	350
	Bush Cocoon	800	2300 x 800 x 700	Reflex	Reflex	Yes	Yes	Yes	Zip, dome	Box	●●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	400
Mountain Designs Australia															
	Bivvy bag	850	2130 x 870 x 630	Gore-Tex	Gore-Tex	Yes	Yes	Yes	Zip	Box	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	420
	Side-entry	1029	2130 x 870 x 630	Gore-Tex	Gore-Tex	Yes	Yes	Yes	Zip	Box	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	490
	Foxhole	1172	2530 x 1080 x 750	Gore-Tex	Gore-Tex	Yes	Yes	No	Zip	Box	●●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	570
One Planet New Zealand															
	Hollow Log	930	2300 x 800 x 250	Gore-Tex	Gore-Tex	Yes	No	No	Zip	Mummy	●●●	●●●	●●●●	●●●	420
	Schrund	890	2100 x 700 x 250	Gore-Tex	Gore-Tex	No	No	Yes	Zip, hood	Mummy	●●●●	●●●	●●●●	●●●	440
Outdoor Research USA															
	Standard	540	2100 x 625 x 525	Gore-Tex	Nylon	Yes	Yes	Yes	Zip	Box	●●●	●●●	●●●●	●●●●	500
	Advanced fl	870	2250 x 625 x 525	Gore-Tex	Nylon	Yes	Yes	No	Zip, pole	Box	●●●	●●●	●●●●	●●●	600
Paddy Pallin Australia															
	Standard	650	2350 x 800 x 600	Gore-Tex	Nylon	No	No	Yes	Press-stud	Box	●●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●●	280
	Ultralight	470	2000 x 750 x 400	Gore-Tex	Gore-Tex	No	No	No	Draw-cord	Mummy	●●	●●●●	●●	●●●	300
	Super **	900	2450 x 850 x 600	Gore-Tex	Nylon	Yes	Yes	Yes	Zip	Box	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	400
Wilderness Equipment Australia															
	SR Bivisac ***	600	2100 x 825 x 600	Gore-Tex	Gore-Tex	Yes §	No	Yes	Zip	Box	●●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	465
	Mountain Bivisac	680	2500 x 825 x 350	Gore-Tex	Nylon	Yes §	No	Yes	Zip	Box	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●	540
	Dart Bivitent * x fl	830	2350 x 700 x 500	Gore-Tex	Gore-Tex	Yes	Yes	No	Zip, pole	Box	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●	720

One-person tents

Adventure Designs China														
	Flashback	1700	2500 x 1200 x 1200	Polyester	1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Zip	●●●●	●●●	●●	●●	360
Eureka Vietnam														
	Gossamer	1500	2400 x 800 x 650	Polyester	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Zip	●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●●	215
Macpac New Zealand														
	Microlight	1900	2200 x 1300 x 1000	Polyester	1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Zip	●●●●	●●●	●●●	●●●	490
Salewa Philippines														
	Micra	2200	2100 x 1200 x 1110	Polyester	1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Zip	●●●	●●●	●●	●●	370

● poor ●● average ●●● good ●●●● excellent Material: Gore-Tex, Reflex and Toddrex are all said to be breathable, waterproof fabrics # extra-long size available * half Gore-Tex available
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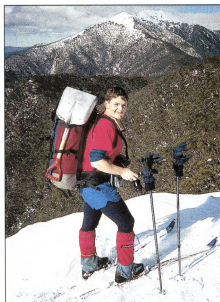
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with being able to take more—I'll just put another widget in, it doesn't weigh much.' In effect, you end up with a 25 kilogram pack of things that don't weigh much. Cutting the weight down by using a bivvy-bag instead of a full-blown tent is a good start.

However, even with bivvy-bags made of the latest materials and construction, I am yet to find one that is free of leaks or condensation, particularly when put to the test in the mountains. This is determined more by the inherent characteristics of bivvy-bags than by a particular one being at fault.

Accordingly, it helps enormously if your bivvy-bag has taped seams, and if you use the bag properly (for instance, by not letting drizzle fall into an open head area because it will work its way further in).



If all else fails you can dig your own. Nick Tapp

Bivvy-bags and one-person tents are specialised products. They are not as widely available in outdoors shops as other items *Wild* surveys.

Not included in the table are three products by Australian manufacturers: the Alpine Bivy, by Summit; and the Hibernator bivvy-bag and Silo bivvy-bag tent, by Mont. Also not included is the Bivvy Bag, by New Zealand manufacturer Fairydawn. These products are not widely available in Australia.

Weight

To an extent weight will be a trade-off against performance. It's a case of determining the appropriate balance relevant to your intended use. A heavier bag might last longer as it is probably made of more durable materials. The weights in this survey are those supplied to the retailers. If you want to know exact weights, take scales to the shop with you.

Insect screens

Most bivvy-bags have insect screens (optional on some), which may be well worth while.

Peg- and tie loops

Typical complaints about bivvy-bags are the base rolling around during sleep (alleviated somewhat by using peg loops—provided that you have somewhere to put the pegs) and congestion around the face/head, particularly when the bag is sealed during bad weather. More space can be created by using tie loops to hold the head area up, provided that you have something to which they may be tied.

Points to watch

Tape-sealed seams

If you want to maximise the chance of staying dry, tape-sealed seams are essential.

Dimensions and design

Is the bivvy-bag too long? Too short? Is there enough foot room? Will the zip be easy to find in a 40 knot rainy southerly? Will it inhibit the size/loft of your sleeping-bag?

Materials

A breathable material is essential, at the very least on top. For any sort of snow use, ensure that you buy a fully breathable, waterproof bivvy-bag. For tents: what is the fly made of?

Relevance

Remember to choose the most suitable bag for your application.

Specifications

Most manufacturers' specifications are accurate, but check if you want to be absolutely sure.

Entrance closure

Bivvy-bag entrances are typically zips in a curved formation. Some are reinforced with domes. The opening extends down the side/s from the head. Zip length varies.

Roominess

Some of the heavier bivvy-bags have more room; people may like to have their gear with them inside the bivvy-bag. If you put your gear in your pack, perhaps a less spacious and lighter bag will appeal.

A lightweight, one-person tent will be much more comfortable than a bivvy-bag, particularly in wind and rain. All the tents surveyed can take two people at a squeeze, so consider taking one on a lightweight, two-person trip rather than two bivvy-bags.

Range of use

The 'Range of use' rating gives an indication of the weather conditions a particular shelter can handle, from a light rain shower to snowfall.

Value for money

The 'Value for money' rating reflects the design, construction and materials used in relation to cost. As in the one-person shelters survey in *Wild* no 60, there isn't any relationship between the 'Value for money' and 'Range of use' ratings. ●

Andrew Linblade lives in Melbourne and climbs rocks and mountains.

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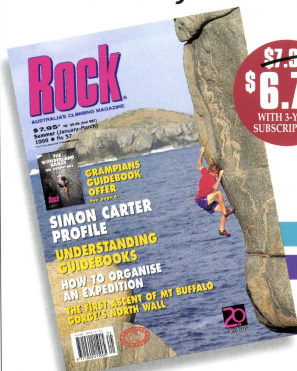
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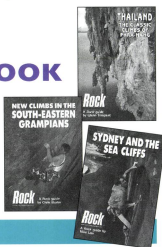
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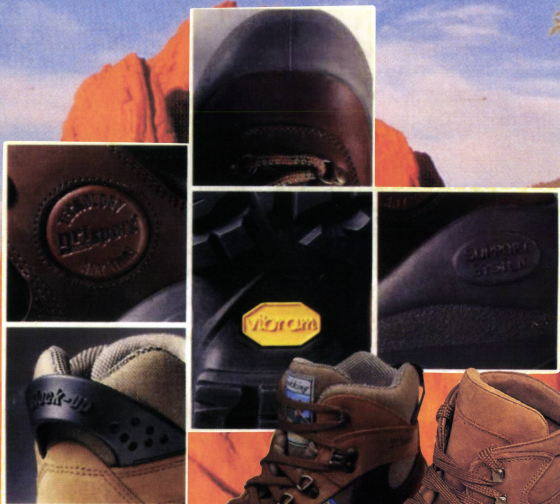
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Gear freaks' paradise

IceTrek shows the way

Paint it

For those who want to paint their own day pack, check out the *Paint Bag*, by Tatonka. RRP \$69.95.

EUREKA!

In *Eureka's* 1999 range is the *Bush Walker*, a lightweight, two-person tent. It has a side entrance with a good-sized vestibule for storage and a small vestibule at the rear end for additional storage. It weighs 2.5 kilograms. RRP \$385.



Home extensions

The *Front Porch* tensile tarp is a front vestibule extension that can be used with a number of different styles of tents. A lightweight shelter can be made by using a *Footprints* groundsheet, tent poles and certain tent-flies. Both products are made by *Mountain Hardwear*. Available from *Snowgum*. RRP \$219 and \$39.95-\$59.95, respectively.

Down boosted

Fairydown has released new and revamped down sleeping-bags. The *Polar* (weighing about two kilograms) is the beefiest-looking, while the *Arete ST* and *Superlite ST* are lightweight (each weighing about 1.3 kilograms). All three sleeping-bags are encased in a *DryLoft* outer, and along with *Fairydown's* other 'performance' sleeping-bags—including the *Everest*, *Scorpion* and *Kosciuszko*—are said to be filled with 100 per cent goose down with a fill power of 700 cubic inches. (Some *Fairydown* models are filled with 90 per cent down.) Available in selected outdoors shops. RRP for the standard sizes is \$699, \$569, \$515, \$649, \$599 and \$539, respectively.



Pole cats

Two new *Polaris* products are the reversible *Retro-Active*, a windproof fleece with full side ventilation zips, and the lightweight and fast-drying *Reactive Shirt*. Available by mail order; phone (02) 4883 6509. RRP \$245 and \$55, respectively.

Sacre bleu!

The Australian icon, beloved by generations of New South Wales bushwalkers despite myriad lacerated and twisted ankles, the *Dunlop Volley sand-shoe* has broken with 60 years' tradition and has been relaunched. For the die-hard there is the *Volley International*, available in white

moving *Wild* subscribers can be among the first to road-, oops, track-test 'em. See the *Wild* subscriptions advertisements on pages 53 and 83.

Tech toes

Grisport has a *trekking shoe* 'with all the features of a high-tech boot'. Made in Italy, the suede *Cordura* shoe has Cambrelle lining, a breathable liner and a Vibram sole. There are many models in the *Original Trekking System* line. Distributed by *Reflex Sports*; telephone (02) 9211 1334. RRP's range from \$189 to \$259.



Clockwise from top left: *Polaris Retro-Active* reversible, windproof fleece; *Grisport* trekking shoe; *Dunlop Volley Classic* sand-shoes; and *Fairydown Polar* sleeping-bag.

Putting the boot in

In *Wild* no 70 we reported how the timely dispatch of Wilderness Wear clothing deep into the Amazon jungle averted almost certain mutiny in a mining camp. This prompted *Rossi Boots* to inform us that it was contacted under the same circumstances and it, too, helped to avert insurrection by dispatch of its products, in this case a substantial shipment of *Rossi Eagle* boots.

Rossi Boots has produced two new bushwalking boots, the *Tamar* and the *Todd*. The boots combine a stylish upper design, Nubuck leathers and a sole with a

only. RRP \$25. Those with yuppie inclinations will no doubt be drawn to the *Classic* range which 'offers a shoe for the more demanding sports and fashion customer'. The *Classic* is available in either canvas (in black or white) or suede in 'seven fashion shades'. RRP \$40 and \$50, respectively. Available from department stores. Fast-

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Solo	2 watts	2AA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5hrs	8hrs	127g	—	Yes
Vortec	4 watts	4AA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5hrs	8hrs	227g	Yes	—

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Clockwise from top left: Rossi Tamar walking boot; Princeton Tec Quest headlamp; and Iridium Kyocera satellite phone.

cavity construction for comfort. Approximate RRP \$150 each.

Italian lizard

The *Super Hihe* and *Super Hihe Nubuck sport sandals* are made by *Lizard* in Italy. The former has a suede foot-bed; the latter uses Nubuck leather. Distributed by *Outdoor Agencies*. RRP \$129 and \$159, respectively.

Slip doubt

The *Hexagrip* self-inflating sleeping-mat, by *SunnyRec Corporation*, has a 'hexagon' surface that grips you to prevent you from slipping. It contains open-cell foam. Distributed by *Spelean*. Approximate RRP for the standard weight long mat is \$179.

Don't ring us...

The *Iridium IceTrek* (see *Wild Information*) has brought to light two products for the gear freak who truly has everything. At less than 400 grams the *Iridium Kyocera satellite phone* is a lightweight as such products go. Much more important, *Iridium* claims to be the first truly global mobile satellite network, enabling subscribers to communicate using hand-held *Iridium* satellite phones anywhere in the world. But at a RRP of \$5948 the *Kyocera* satellite phone is for major rescue organisations rather than for the average weekend warrior!

Speaking of *IceTrek*, it is interesting to note that the expedition pulled gear in a plastic sled developed in Melbourne by canoe manufacturer *Nylex Rotomould* and *RMIT University*. The sled weighs only 15 kilograms and can carry a load of ten times that amount. It is said to be highly durable, abrasion- and wear-resistant and able to withstand a temperature of -40 degrees C.

Pole on

Four Italian-made *Gabel* telescopic trekking poles are on the market: the *Compact Ande*, *Discovery*, *Crosswalk Photo* and *Anti-Impact*. Distributed by *Malcon Trading Company*;

phone (03) 9489 9766. RRP \$62, \$75, \$99 and \$99, respectively.

Not just a water-bottle

The US-made *Safe Water* portable water filtration system may look like an 'easy squeeze' water-bottle, however, it is designed 'to remove and/or dramatically reduce a vast array of health threatening contaminants from questionable sources of water'. The filtration system is available in three sizes through *Intertek*, *Snowgum* and *Bahpakha*. RRP \$79 each.

Hot and cold

Action Sports has a *Primus Heat Pad* for use in extreme cold. It provides reusable, instant heat. Distributed by *Spelean*. Approximate RRP \$9.95.

FLASHER

The new *Quest Headlamp* is claimed to be waterproof. It uses two (common) AA batteries and a krypton bulb (a halogen bulb is optional) and weighs 127 grams. Made by *Princeton Tec* and distributed by *Outdoor Agencies*. RRP \$49.95.



TOOL

Leatherman has put out the *Wave multitool* which features 'easy access' to four locking blades. Made of stainless steel, it has 'improved screwdriver capability, comfortable handles and a wide range of features'. Distributed by *Zen Imports*.

Bags of fun

The *Glacier Clear Dry Bag*, by US company *Seattle Sports*, is available in five sizes, ranging from 5-57 litres. Phone *Anso* on (03) 9471 1500. RRP \$30-\$72.

Candle power

Few major players can yet claim to have been around for a quarter of a century in the Australasian outdoors industry. New Zealand's *Macpac Wilderness Equipment*, well known to many Australian rucksack-sports enthusiasts for, among many other classic products, the *Olympus* tent and *Cascade* rucksack, is a notable exception. It celebrates its 25th anniversary this year. Naturally, *Macpac's* heritage includes the *de rigueur* start-up in a garage.

Raising the flag

Following the route taken by *Patagonia*, another overseas outdoor clothing and footwear manufacturer of note-US company *Columbia Sports-wear*-has opened its first shop in the Southern hemisphere, doing so in Sydney last November.

trix

Hit the bottle
A magic water-bottle,
by John Wilde

At a party the main topic of conversation centred around the ability of an individual to carry up to 40 litres of water in his or her sea kayak across Torres Strait. A demonstration showed how to turn a two litre PET bottle into an ultracheap, solid water-bottle.

Simply fill the bottle with boiling water and watch it shrink to approximately half its size. When it has cooled slightly, empty out or retain the water as necessary. This saves you spending a lot of money on commercial water-bottles, avoids the vulnerability of the old wine cask-and after a quick trip to the local recycling depot gives you a 40 litre carrying capacity.

Wild welcomes readers' contributions to this section; payment is at our standard rate. Send them to the address at the end of this department.

Nose bag?

For a food bag that is 'durable, reusable, lightweight and waterproof', try the *Reusable Food Bag*, by US company *Cloud Peak Equipment*. Available sizes: 1.5 litres and 3 litres. Distributed by *Anso*. RRP \$40 and \$46, respectively.

Zone din

Many companies are riding on the short-tails of the revolutionary diet expounded by Barry Sears in his best-selling book *Enter the Zone*. One is a New Zealand business which manufactures *VitaZone* food bars, claimed to keep insulin levels in the body at optimum levels-a fundamental of the radical Sears approach. Distributed in Australia by *Insight Health*. RRP \$3.50 each. ●

This department describes new products which the editorial staff consider will be of interest to readers. The tests they apply for inclusion are whether a product is useful for the rucksack sports, and whether it is fundamentally new (or newly available in Australia). The reports are based on information provided by the manufacturer/distributor. As is the case with all editorial text appearing in *Wild*, publication of material in this department is in no way connected with advertising. Submissions for possible publication are accepted from advertisers and from businesses not advertising in *Wild*, as well as from our readers. (See also the footnote below.)

Products (on loan to *Wild*) and/or information about them, including colour slides, are welcome for possible review in this department. Written items should be typed, include recommended retail prices and preferably not exceed 200 words. Send them to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181.

To people buying boots at Ajays, Phill Carter is something of a Prince Charming

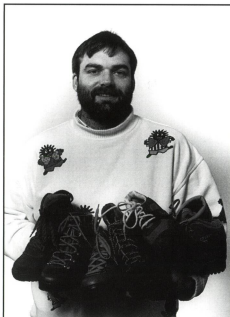
He's always looking for the perfect fit.

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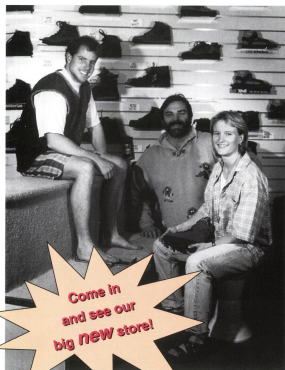
Just now we are clearing out a number of discontinued lines so there are some unbeatable bargains to be snapped up. And we give our "Boot Fit Guarantee" on every boot we sell, including remaindered stock.

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F^orest bloodshed

Loggers turn nasty

Otway violence

Tension is mounting at the front line of action against the clear-felling of native forest in the Otway Ranges, south-west of Melbourne. In the latest incident, protesters were blockaded into a logging coupe in the Otway State Forest by loggers, timber-mill workers and union members from 25–29 January. The protesters had been attempting to halt logging operations at a nearby logging coupe. Members of the Otway Ranges Environment Network (OREN) are concerned that the blockade is a further escalation of a campaign of intimidation with the purpose of stifling local objection against the highly contentious clear-felling of native forests.

On 1 December Greens candidate Adrian Whitehead was knocked unconscious when a member of a logging team allegedly hit him with an axe-handle. His resulting head wound needed five stitches. Matthew Rees, a conservationist, was struck on the head with the blunt end of a hand axe. Both men had been viewing the destruction of forests in the Cumberland River catchment. On 10 January a tree was allegedly felled on top of ten environmentalists while they were blocking a bulldozer; one protester was slightly injured as he ran with the others to avoid being crushed by the tree.

Environmentalists are concerned about the clear-felling of Otway native forests and the effects of this on native flora and fauna and water catchments of towns such as Lorne and Geelong.

A report on the impact of native-forest logging on the economic future of the Surf Coast Shire has been presented to the shire by OREN. The key conclusions of the report were: first, logging area and production volumes have risen dramatically. Forest quality appears to be declining. Secondly, reclassification of logs from 'D Grade Sawlog' to 'Residual' has enabled the industry to stay technically below the legislated sustainable yield limit. In reality, the industry is logging well above sustainable levels. Thirdly, the industry is clearly pulpwood driven.

The area logged has increased by 400 per cent since 1990–91. Production has risen by 200 per cent. As a result of the growth in Residual volumes, 87 per cent of Otway



Anti-logging demonstrator Adrian Whitehead after being allegedly hit on the head with an axe-handle on Garveys Track in the Otway Ranges, Victoria. *Otway Ranges Environment Network*

native timber now ends up as pulp. Department of Natural Resources & Environment claims about logging in the Otways: 'DINRE's Forests Service remains committed to seeking high value-adding, local markets for logs harvested from native forests. No forests in the Otways are specifically logged for wood-chipping. Logs for wood-chipping are only supplied as a by-product of sawlog harvesting or silvicultural operations.'

The economic significance of logging and sawmilling in the region: first, hardwood logging and sawmilling employs only 211 people in the region—1.7 per cent of the total workforce. Secondly, employment in hardwood logging and sawmilling is steadily declining, having decreased by almost one-

third since 1981. This despite the large volume increase in log removal. It is expected that employment will continue to decline.

The economic impact of logging Otway native forests on the wider community: first, the Victorian Government received only \$1.3 million in royalties from the logging of Otway native forests in 1997–98. Secondly, costs incurred by the DNRE to support this logging were estimated to be about \$2.3 million. Thirdly, the subsidy—an estimated \$1 million a year—is a cost to the wider Victorian economy which should be taken into account when considering the economic value of logging in the Otways.

A Regional Forest Agreement for the Western region (including the Otways) has been proposed and will be finalised before the end of 1999.

Act now

To support the campaign, phone OREN on (03) 5237 7516.

Undermined

The December issue of *Mining Monitor* reports that sections of the oil and mining industry are lobbying for the repeal of amendments made by the *Company Law Review Act*. The amendments require companies to include in their annual reports a statement of compliance with environmental legislation.

The October issue of the same newsletter states that the Minerals Council of Australia is taking a hard-line position by pushing the government further to weaken the provisions of draft Commonwealth environmental legislation. The council is arguing for legislation that would expand the legal rights of companies, restrict factors that ministers could consider in making decisions and reduce the legal rights of community groups. It is pressing the government to withdraw the draft legislation and redraft it as a more industry-friendly bill based on voluntary environmental standards negotiated directly with the oil and mining industry. The overhaul of Commonwealth environmental legislation has followed the 1992 Inter-Governmental Agreement on Environment, which reduced the role of the Commonwealth in environmental policy.

Our dwindling wild rivers

Few Australian rivers remain wild, and most suffer the ill effects of agriculture, industry and human settlement, the *Age* reported on 4 January. Only three regions could be said to contain rivers in pristine condition: South-west Tasmania, the Prince Regent area in the west Kimberley, and Arnhem Land. Researchers at the Australian National University found that the Murray-Darling basin was one of the most disturbed areas because of farming and dam construction.

Our vanishing forests

According to the first national inventory of forests released by the Bureau of Rural Sciences in December, Australia has lost about 36 per cent of its forests since European settlement. A 1990 study, cited in the survey, found that, with a loss of 59 per cent, Victoria's forests were the most ravaged by European settlement.

QUEENSLAND

Buying back the bush

The Australian Bush Heritage Fund is continuing to 'buy back the bush' throughout Australia. At the end of 1998 it announced another significant purchase with the acquisition of 'Goonderoo', a 600 hectare former pastoral property comprising endangered brigalow woodlands near Emerald in central Queensland.

'Goonderoo' is the second property acquired by Bush Heritage in Queensland (the other being in the Daintree rainforest) and the ninth overall in Australia.

Doug Humann

▲ Act now

To help the Australian Bush Heritage Fund 'Buy Back the Bush' phone 1800 677 101 or (03) 6223 2670 to receive a tax-deductible donation or receive further information.

Keep out!

A Gympie sawmiller and the Wilderness Society have called for the export wood-chip industry to be kept out of Queensland's native forests. In the *Australian* on 15 January, sawmiller Al Corbet expressed dismay at the prospect of export wood-chipping destroying both the forests and local small business with the signing of Regional Forest Agreements. The society responded by calling on State and local government authorities to ensure that export wood-chipping does not gain a secure initial position in the State.

Hope on the Cape

With the election of the Beattie Labor Government in Queensland, there is now an opportunity to complete a Regional Agreement in Cape York. This could show that these agreements are achievable, rational, and a highly preferable alternative to the extinguishment of native title rights.

Steven Nowakowski

VICTORIA

Nine cents a tonne?

As reported in the *Age* on 27 January, the Kennett Government has been selling off wood-chipping rights to Victoria's native forests for royalties of as little as nine cents a tonne. The revelation, contained in a letter to one of the largest mills in the State, will add fuel to claims that the government has been propping up the logging industry at the expense of alternatives such as plantations and recycling. Critics claim that low royalties on native-forest logging amount to a subsidy which is pricing environment-friendly alternatives out of the pulp market.

Don't log the frog

The Wilderness Society's efforts to protect Victoria's last wilderness area—the Wongungarra—from logging have strengthened in recent months with support from groups such as the Victorian National Parks Association and Friends of the Earth. In early January Stephen Lunn, environment writer for the *Australian*, travelled to the Wongungarra River valley with TWS's Richard Hughes and *Wild*'s former assistant editor Stephen

Curtain, among others. In a subsequent article in the *Australian* on 16 January, Lunn reported that the Wongungarra's 'symbolic similarity to the remote Franklin River in Tasmania [was] hard to dismiss'. The Wongungarra—also a magnificent back-country ski-touring destination—requires your ongoing support.

Stephen Curtain

▲ Act now

Write to Marie Tehan, Minister for Conservation & Land Management, 8 Nicholson St, East Melbourne, Vic 3002. To support the Wilderness Society, phone (03) 9670 5229.

Sold out

The rights to 165 000 hectares of public land were transferred to a US-dominated consortium without public consultation when the Victorian Plantations Corporation was sold by the State Government in December. Hancock Victorian Plantations now has perpetual logging and plantation rights over vast tracts of formerly public land including areas in the Strzelecki and Otway Ranges.

Ione McLean

▲ Act now

Write to Marie Tehan, at the above address, and the newspapers, asking whether the State Government should be able to sell thousands of hectares of public land without any public consultation. Call Rod Anderson at Environment Victoria on (03) 9348 9044 for more information.

Court wins

In early December the Department of Natural Resources & Environment was found to have authorised logging in an Otways water reserve and illegally taken logs from local government land without permission. This was reported in the summer 1998–99 issue of the *Potoroo Review*. The 11 people up for obstructing a lawful logging operation had all charges dismissed and costs of \$25 000 were awarded against the department.

On another court note, *Wild* readers might remember a Green Pages item in issue 69 regarding Senator Bob Brown being found not guilty of obstructing a lawful logging operation. (Brown was arrested in the Goolgook forest in East Gippsland in 1997. See the profile of him in this issue.) In October last year the matter was appealed in the Supreme Court. However, Justice Kellam agreed with the Moe Magistrate's Court that 'the prosecutions had failed to establish...that the forest operations in question were lawful'.

Melbourne barrister and Wild Publications founding director Brian Walters acted for the Otways environmentalists and Bob Brown.

Falls Creek furore

The Falls Creek Resort Planning Framework was released in October. The major proposals are: first, to develop the Mt McKay alpine ski field with three lifts and a building. Secondly, to replace the Windy Corner facilities with a day visitor centre on the Falls Creek side of the Rocky Valley dam wall. The centre would include a car park and a toboggan slope; it would be shared by Nordic and alpine skiers. A realigned and sealed road passing to the east of the Nordic bowl would connect the



Above, major 'development' is planned for the Nordic ski bowl area at Falls Creek, Victoria... *Michael Hampton*. **Top right**, ...and for the nearby Mt McKay area. **Bottom right**, Melbourne rally against proposed 'development' for Wilsons Promontory, Victoria. *Michael Dempsey*

centre to the Falls Creek village. Several trails would be lost to new alpine ski runs. Thirdly, to upgrade the existing ski field with seven new lifts and a new building on Frying Pan Spur. Fourthly, to develop a new commercial precinct in the Village Bowl, and an accommodation precinct in East Falls Creek (extending to include Windy Corner). A helipad is being considered for Windy Corner.

On 11-13 December sixty people attended a camp to defend Mt McKay. The camp was organised by the VNPA. Participants demonstrated against the excision of 285 hectares, including Mt McKay, from the Alpine National Park.

A further threat is the proposal to raise the water-level of Rocky Valley dam, adjacent to Mt McKay, by up to 2.4 metres. This could destroy many of the endangered alpine bog communities in the region.

Protesting the Prom

About 2000 people marched to Parliament House, Melbourne, on 29 November to protest against the proposed developments in the Wilsons Promontory National Park. This was the finale of the 243 kilometre Really Great Prom Walk. Walkers presented an alternative community vision for the management of the Prom to parliamentarians.

Rainforest rage

In mid-October Jon Sago informed us of an 'outrageous act of vandalism' on the southern slopes of the Baw Baw plateau in Gippsland. He says that the construction of a logging road will destroy untouched cool temperate rainforest.

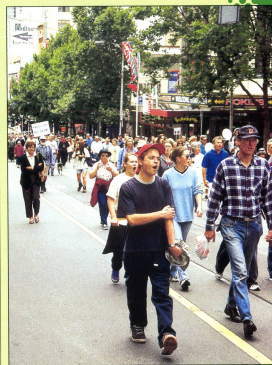
VICTORIA

In a hole

Climbers throughout the world returning from Irian Jaya's highest peak, Carstensz Pyramid (regarded by many as one of the

sought-after 'Seven Summits'), have repeatedly published strong criticism of the giant Freeport copper-mine on the southern flank of the magnificent peak. Criticisms include the enormous environmental impact of the project on the vegetation and water of the region, and the social impact on the local indigenous people.

The October issue of *Mining Monitor* reports that in the wake of the Suharto regime's fall, the Freeport mine faces an uncertain future, with independence groups threatening not to renew contracts with the mine's owners. The same edition reports progress in the USA with a legal ac-



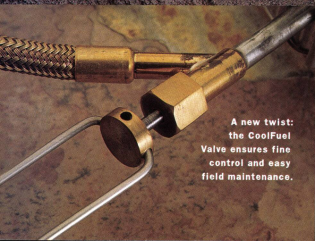
tion against Freeport for alleged human rights abuses, and mounting disquiet in the Indonesian Parliament concerning the benefit to that troubled country of having Freeport in Indonesia and whether the company had yet met its environmental obligations. **1**

Readers' contributions to this department, including colour slides, are welcome. Typed items of less than 200 words are more likely to be printed. Send them to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181.

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Dombrovskis

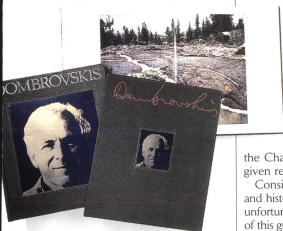
A remarkable tribute to the master

BOOKS

● Dombrovskis: a Photographic Collection

by Peter Dombrovskis (West Wind Press, 1998, RRP \$125).

Published by his widow, Liz Dombrovskis, this is a substantial and spectacular tribute to the life and work of Australia's greatest wilderness photographer. It contains an



essay on Dombrovskis by Bob Brown, and one by Jamie Kirkpatrick on the wild places pictured. The photos are varied, vintage Dombrovskis and the production values are as good as those of any book I've seen. Few books warrant the term 'collector's item'; *Dombrovskis* is a conspicuous exception.

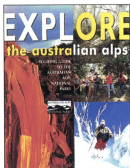
Chris Baxter

● Explore the Australian Alps

by the Australian Alps Liaison Committee (New Holland, 1998, RRP \$29.95).

This is a—mainly two-wheel—driving guide to that magnificent range stretching from north-east Victoria into south-east New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. It is well produced, has very good photos and is both informative and useful. *Explore the Australian Alps* provides an inspirational overview and starting-point for walking and ski-touring in the mountains which, however, don't need further vehicular access.

CB



● Car Touring and Bushwalking in the Southern Flinders Ranges

by Grant Da Costa (Acacia Vines, 1998, RRP \$21.95).

Of the recent guides to the Flinders Ranges this is undoubtedly one of the best—subject to the geographic limitation mentioned below. The author casts a wide net and gives a good account not only of popular haunts like Telowie Gorge and Mt Remarkable but also of little gems such as Devils Peak and Mt Arden.

The information is crisply set out with detailed maps, track notes, and touring advice. The accompanying photographs—particularly the larger landscape images—are outstanding for a book of this format. Although most of the featured bushwalks are brief day- or overnight affairs it is pleasing to see that areas such as the Chace Range and the Elder Range are given recognition.

Considering the emphasis on settlements and historical sites the lack of a reading list is unfortunate. But the most bewildering aspect of this guide is the termination of its coverage at St Marys Peak. It is almost inconceivable that any visitor to Wilpena Pound would not want to sample the stunning gorges, scenic drives and bushwalks immediately to the north as well—at least as far as Brachina Gorge. To consign this area to a planned separate volume is a serious misreading of user needs.

Quentin Chester

● Dawn till Dusk in the Stirling and Porongurup Ranges

by Rob & Stuart Olver (University of Western Australia Press, 1998, RRP \$45 hard cover, \$34.95 paper cover).

When brothers Rob and Stuart Olver migrated to Western Australia from South Africa during their teens, they 'longed for an area akin to the wild and lonely parts of Africa'. That was until their parents took them to the Stirling and Porongurup Ranges—where they discovered similar mountain grandeur to that experienced in the ranges of their birthplace. Their book *Dawn till Dusk* is a celebration of im-

ages and passionate text covering this spectacular part of south-west WA.

The Stirling and Porongurup Ranges are only 30 kilometres apart, yet are in stark contrast to each other. *Dawn till Dusk* highlights these differences with images of mist-shrouded, rugged peaks and delicate wild flowers in the Stirlings through to vistas of granite domes in the Porongurups rising out of lush karri forest.

The 176-page, large-format book combines a coffee-table layout with a practical guide format featuring informative sections on history, geology, flora and fauna. General facilities are included as well as track notes for day- and multi-day walks. Chapters on rockclimbing and gliding activities—as well as local wineries—further highlight the range of attractions in this mountainous region.

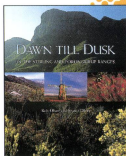
Dawn till Dusk has an appealing design with useful maps and a variety of photo sizes interspersed throughout the text. Dawn scenes of mountains above a sea of clouds and the unusual cloud 'waterfall' phenomenon are depicted beautifully. Some views of the eastern Stirling Range from Quanderward Lake give a fresh perspective, as do aerial shots from gliders and close-ups of unique orchids. This book fills a gap and serves as a valuable reference to one of WA's most remarkable regions.

David Wagland

● Under Bungonia

by Julie & Peter Bauer (JB Books, 1998, RRP \$45 from PO Box 115, Oak Flats, NSW 2529).

I started caving at Bungonia just after the Sydney Speleological Society produced *Bungonia Caves*, published in 1972 to showcase the area in support of a conservation challenge to the quarrying of limestone at South Marulan. This book became the first mass market, de facto guidebook to an Australian caving area and numerous people like me spent a lot of time ticking off caves and finding new ones. *Bungonia Caves* was soon out of date. It took another 26 years to be 'updated'. This self-published volume almost solely represents the efforts of husband-and-wife team Julie and



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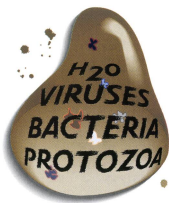


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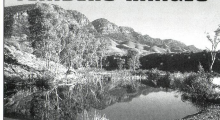
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Peter Bauer. During this time they completely resurveyed all the caves—this is an incredible effort and the book is a credit to them. Julie, a geologist, has also updated the geology and geomorphology but the best part is that all the surveys are now in metres.

For me, this book was a trip down memory lane. For the many novice cavers who use it as a guidebook there is a change in emphasis from the SSS book. Today the caves are no longer threatened by mining companies but by the cavers themselves. The book serves an important role in educating the population in minimal-impact caving. For the sake of all Australians I hope that people will learn from this book and respect this remarkable caving area.

Stephen Bunton

● Tramping in New Zealand

by Jim DuFresne (Lonely Planet, fourth edition 1998, RRP \$24.95).

Fast becoming a classic, *Tramping in New Zealand* has, on average, been revised and reissued every four years since its first edition in 1982. It is now a polished and mature publication describing 49 walks from the northern tip of the North Island to Stewart Island, south of the South Island. In addition, it contains much useful background information, excellent maps and many illustrations.

CB

● Wild and Free

by Nicholas Birks (New Holland, 1998, RRP \$49.95).

Coffee-table books of Australian natural history photos are ubiquitous. Many are excellent but only an exceptional book will stand out from the crowd. *Wild and Free* is such an exception. It's not that the photography is better than that found in many similar books. Rather, the difference is in the subject matter. Almost every photo exhibits dramatic action—such as raptors in flight—or humour, sometimes subtle. The result is irresistible charm.

The photos were not all taken in wilderness settings. Far from it. Indeed, there are photos of feral animals including foxes, cats and even rabbits. This does not detract from the book. On the contrary, these photos are used as important discussion points about the threat to the native environment posed by feral animals. Another difference between *Wild and Free* and many other books on natural history photography is the personal nature of the text which, although brief, is both rich in anecdote and strong on education.

CB

● Kakadu: A Guide for All Seasons

photos by Peter Jarver, text by Quentin Chester (Thunderhead Publishing, 1998, RRP \$22.50).

When you combine the talents of one of Australia's best wilderness photographers

with those of the country's pre-eminent outdoors writer, the odds are that the result will be a winner. It is all the more likely when both have an intimate knowledge of, and share a passion for, their subject, as is the case with *Kakadu*. The book is produced to a very high standard yet sold at so reasonable a price that we, the book-buying public, are the winners.

CB

MAPS

● Northern Budawang Range

(The Budawang Committee, ninth edition 1998, RRP \$9.00 from the Budawang Committee, 40 Alexandria Ave, Eastwood, NSW 2122).

Since 1960, bushwalkers in the northern Budawang Range—one of the most popular bushwalking regions in New South Wales—have been guided by an excellent sketch map.

Experienced bushwalkers with an intimate knowledge of the region keep the map up to date and reissue new editions from time to time. Many of the early editions are collectors' items today.

As the most spectacular Budawang walking routes are now within a declared wilderness region, the NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service is trying to control access to popular areas where bushwalkers have moved freely for 38 years.

During preparation of the new map the NPWS applied considerable pressure on the Budawang Committee to omit important details such as negotiable routes, camping caves, existing roads and tracks within the wilderness area.

In the interests of safety, the committee resisted this pressure. The new map provides useful information for bushwalking in this extremely difficult, rugged area where accurate navigation is essential.

As bushwalking sketch maps go, this is one of the best. There's a wealth of detail to help walkers find routes through some of the State's most difficult terrain. The map shows the location of camp-sites in areas where good sites are scarce. It also shows a small number of camping caves—a life-saving feature greatly appreciated by walking parties caught by the region's sudden weather changes.

The new map includes the extension south to Currockbilly Mountain, taking in the northern part of the Budawang National Park. Bushwalkers now have a single map that covers all the best walking areas in the Budawangs.

The publishers evidently designed the map to help the thousands of relatively inexperienced walkers who now flock to the region. Extensive notes are on the back of the map.

Brian Walker

Publications for possible review are welcome. Send them to the Editor, *Wild*, PO Box 415, Prahran, Vic 3181.



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crag and ice module



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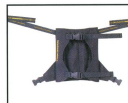
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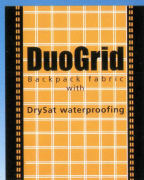
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